

A
VINDICATION
OF CHURCHES
COMMONLY CALLED
INDEPENDENT:

^{O R}
A BRIEF ANSWER

to two Books; the one, intituled,

Twelve considerable serious Questions, touching
CHURCH-GOVERNMENT:

The other, *INDEPENDENT*
examined, unmasked, refuted, &c.

Both lately published by WILLIAM PRINNE,
of LINCOLNES-Inne, Esquire.

By HENRY BURTON, a Brother of his,
and late Companion in Tribulation.

MAT. 10. 34, 35, 36.

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I come not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law: And a mans foes shall be they of his own household.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himselfe, and take up his crosse daily, and follow me. Luk. 9. 23.

The third Edition. Entered and printed according to Order.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Henry Overton, in Popes-head Alley. 1644.



TO M^r WILLIAM PRINNE, &c.



Y deare Brother, and late *companion in tribulation*, you propound your *twelve Questions to all sober minded Christians*, cordially effecting a *speedy settled Reformation*, and *brotherly Christian union in all the Churches*, (as you write in Front) and my selfe being one of these, (and no other you shall find me) doe with the right hand take your Propositions as made to me among the rest, craving your leave to returne you a brotherly Answer. And brotherly in nothing more, then by a candid and Christian dealing with you all along, and that also in a matter of such high moment, as concernes the *kingdome and glory of Jesus Christ*. The zeale whereof is that alone, which puts me upon this task; it being otherwise far beyond my thoughts, that you and I, having been fellow-sufferers, and *spectacles to the world*, upon that tragicall stage of Antichristian tyranny, should ever come upon the

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

Theatre as Antagonists; one against the other, about the Kingdome of Jesus Christ. But surely as an Antagonist against you I come not, but in the bowells of a brother. And had not the Book had your name in the Front, my stomack had not stooped so low, as to take it up or downe. But because most men are apt to take all upon trust, where they find Mr. *Prinnes* name engaged: and the Cause being so precious, as it hath by right taken up my whole heart, to become an Advocate to plead the excellency of it: I could not, though the meanest of all, but for the love of Christ constraining me, and by his grace assisting, undertake this taske. Otherwise unwilling *in hoc ulcere esse unguis*, as the Roman Orator said in another case. And this Answer was brought to the birth soone after yours: but it wanted a Midwife, whereof you have plenty. And I have had many interruptions. Notam I so quick of foot, as you. But I may say, as *Ierome* once to young *Augustin*; *Bas lassus fortius figit pedem*. And so in the spirit of love I come to your Booke.

A

VINDICATION OF CHURCHES, COMMONLY CALLED INDEPENDENTS.



You are for a *speedy accomplishment* of a Reformation. And so am I, and so our late Covenant taken, binds every man to begin with himselfe, and those under him, and each to prevent others in the worke. But yet this is sooner said then done. For *shall a Nation be borne at once? Shall* a corrupt, prophane, polluted Land, not yet washed from her old superstitions; not yet wained from the Egyptian fleshpots, not yet wrought off from the spirit of bondage, become all on a sudden a Reformed Nation? But yet *Optandum est ut fiat, conandum est ut fiat*, (to use *Augustine* words of the Conversion of the *Jewes*) It were to be wished, and should be indeavour'd. But as *Rome* was not built in one day, nor the myrery of iniquitie perfected in one day: so neither can *Rome* be so easily pulled downe in one day: nor can *England* become a Mount *Sion* in one day; first the old rubbish will require some time to be removed out of your Church-walls, but how much longer time out of mens hearts, where they have been so long, so fast incorporated? And you know, that the materials of that typicall Temple, the timber, the stone, were all *hewed first, and squared*, before they came to make up the building. Therefore soft and faire. The People are generally ignorant of a right Reformation: A right Reformation is a setting up of Christ's spiritual kingdome, first over the hearts and consciences, and then over the severall Churches. For this,

Pag. 1.

* *Es. 66. 2.*

the

* *Zach. 4.* the * *Carpenters* and *Masons* must be set a work, godly and able *Ministers* must be sought out, and sought for of the *Land*, to fit the crooked timber and rugged bones, for the *Spiritual Temple*. For *England* is generally ignorant of the myserie of *Christs* Kingdome; the *Prelates* usurped all, suppressed altogether this *Spiritual* kingdom; no *Ministers* durst so much as mutter a word of it. Who durst say, that mens *Consciences* are subject to none, but *Christ*? That *Christ* is the only law-giver of his *Church*? That the *Churches* of *Christ* ought not to be burthened with any humane ordinances in Gods *Worship*? That all humane rites and ceremonies invented by men, and imposed on men in Gods service, are all * will-worship, condemned by the *Apostle*? And the like. And yet we deny not that every member in a *Church* is to be subject to the *Officers* thereof, holding out the *Word*, for conscience sake, *Heb. 13. 17*. Now if the *People* have not heard of *Christ* thus a King, nor to this day in most *Congregations* of *England* do heare, or understand any thing of *Christs* kingly Office over *Consciences* and *Churches*, as whereupon a right reformation doth principally depend: how can such a Reformation be speedily set up when the preaching up of *Christs* Kingdome is altogether silent, as if *Ministers* mouths were not yet freed from their old muzzle? Therefore, I conceive, if the better head be not taken, there may be more haste to a Reformation, than good speed: when among so many *Congregations*, so many thousands in *England*, very few would be found to have on the wedding garment. A Reformation therefore, such as God requires, will necessarily require longer time yet, that we may not go blind-fold about it.

You tell us, that *importunity* of some *reverend* friends hath drawn from you *disgusted* *sublime* *apologies* from *those* *distressing* *Consciences*. Who those *reverend* friends are, it matters not. But had I been accounted worthy to be reckoned among those *reverend* friends, to have been made acquainted with such a purpose, I should have used all arguments, besetted with strong reasons, to have dissuaded you from those *sublime* *apologies*. And seeing I come to know them, though somewhat too late, in that they cannot be recalled; admit your self were *displeased*, and your friend *Philo*, yet I will say, *Amicus* *Christus*, *Amicus* *Plato*,

Polio, sed magis alius virider. And therefore I must be plain with you; otherwise I should neither love you, nor your friend, nor yet the truth itself. To be plain therefore, though I know you to be very *Edulis Librum*, of vast & indefatigable reading, and to have a stomach proportionable; of a strong digestion: yet give me leave to tell you, as my loving and beloved friend and brother, that the subject you here deale with, is not of so easie a digestion, as that *subitum*, or sudden apprehension thereof may be well said to be digested. Strong meats, you know, taken downe liberally into the stomach, doe require the longer time for a kindly digestion. And a sudden digestion is apt to leave many indigested crudities, engendering malignant humours in the body.

You digest your apprehensions into considerable Questions, (as you call them) to be solemnly debated by sober minds: but passing along (brother) I find your Questions turned into your owne resolutions, so as in stead of *adverting* them by sober minded men, you foretell them; and tell us, that these Independents, (as you style them) are guilty of Arrogancy, Schisme, Contumacy, and Habble to such penalties, as are due to these offences; in case they shall not submit to such a *humble Church Government*; Banns, Disfellowship, and Synod and Parliament shall censure *non-conformity to Gods Word*, &c. And all along, your *Queries* are so digested by you, as that they cast up a very ill scent, if not rather a judiciall sentence against these Churches, which doe *honour* *cause* you name Independents. But we shall answer to the particulars, as they come in order. Thus much of your Proem, or Preface.

To your first Question.

Before Iounally answer this, and to the rest of your Questions, I must premise this, to be in *forma*, which I must demand of you as due to my Profession: that forasmuch as you are a learned Lawyer, and able to speake much of Lawes, and Customes of Nations, and Churches, and my selfe am a professor of Divinity, the Rules and Principles whereof, are all of them laid downe in the Scripture, unto which alone all Questions about Faith and Religion are so reducible, and finally determinable,

Page 3. Qu. 1.
3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9,
10, 11, 12.

* *Contranegantem principia non est disputandum.*

ble, as who so denieth this, denieth the faith, and is not to be disputed with, as a denier of Principles: therefore I require of you, as a Christian brother, to joyn issue with me in this point, that all your Questions may be resolved by cleare Scriptures, and reason, evidently deduced from them; and this with all brevitie and perspicuitie.

* 1 COR. 14. 40.
& 11. 34.

Harm. of Confessions, sect. 10
11, 26.

Now to your first question, the summe whereof is, *Whether every severall Nation, Republick, and Nationall Church, hath not under the Gospell a Liberty and latitude left them to chuse and settle such an orderly forme of Church-government, Discipline, and Ecclesiasticall Rites, as is most suitable to their particular Civill government, lawes, manners, customes, being not repugnant to the word of God.* This being (as I conceive) a generally received truth among all Protestant Churches. And whether some things in all Church-governments, Discipline, Ceremonies whatsoever, are not, and must not be left to humane prudence, for which there is no direct precept nor pattern in sacred writ? Which truth is asserted to by all parties, Churches, whatsoever, in theory or practice. This is the substance of your first Question.

Ibid.
Observations
brevisime in
totam Harmoniam, sect. 19.
Append. sect. 10.

To which I answer: And first to your quotation of the Harmony, I will answer one for all. Sect. 16. August. Confessio 4. Traditiones deseruiis, &c. *We condemne not Traditions of Holydayes, of the Lords day, of the Natiuity of Easter, and the rest, for a politick end.* Here, you see, they put the observation of the Lords day, among humane Traditions, which I suppose you doe not approve. Again, they allow onely such observations, as God by the Morall Law, and the voyce of Nature it selfe commandeth. And thirdly, That humane rites be not imposed, Ne conscientiz onerentur, That mens consciences bee not burthened. And in a word: To shape Religion in point of Church-government, Discipline, Ceremonies, to every Nation, Republick, Nationall Church, and to Civill Government, Lawes, Manners, Customes, and so to humane Prudence, (as you say) what is it but to shape a coat for the Moone? Whereas the Scripture holds forth unto us, but onely one forme of Church-government, and Discipline, which ought not to be altered according to the diversitie of humane Lawes and Customes in all Kingdomes and Common-wealths as you affirme. And where as you make a proviso, *Always provided, every thing bee consonant*

and

and no way repugnant to the word of God: To what purpose is this, when the very liberty you give of altering Church government and Discipline as may be suitable to humane Laws and Customs, is in self repugnant, and no way consonant to the word of God; as we shall shew by and by. This is to transforme Ecclesiam in humanam politicam, to transforme the Church into a humane Politie. *Imaginationes omnibus ætatibus inde usq; ab inicio mundi nocuerunt Ecclesie, & semper nocebunt.* These imaginations, or fancies, have in all ages from the beginning of the world hurt the Church, and will always hurt. Thus the Harmony.

Now, brother, whereas you seem to challenge us infallibly to evidence by any Gospel Text, that Christ hath peremptorily prescribed one and the self-same form of Ecclesiasticall government, Discipline, Rites, to all Nations, Churches, in all particulars, from which they may in no case vary under pain of mortall sin, schisme, or being no true Churches of Christ, with whom good Christians may not safely communicate: First, what evidence from Scripture can you bring, why it should not necessarily be so? You would seeme to make this a ground why Church government, Discipline, Rites, should be alterable according to the severall laws and customs of severall Nations: Because (say you) Christ enjoyned the preaching of the Gospel to all Nations and People whatsoever, who have their severall established different formes of Civill government, Laws, Manners, Rules and Customs, suitable to their respective dispositions, Climates, Republicks. By this reason you might argue, that therefore the Gospel it self may be preached variously, according to the variation of the climate: and if not so, then (say I) neither is the Church government and Discipline to be varied according to the diversity of Nations, Laws, Customs, Climates. For, brother, the Church government and Discipline now in the time of the Gospel, is a part of the Gospel, is being the Gospel government, and Discipline of the Evangelicall Churches. And, brother, why should you think that Christ now under the Gospel, or New Testament, hath left a greater liberty to men to alter that form of Church government and Discipline, which in the New Testament is laid down, then he did in the Old Testament under the Leviticall Law? What a strict charge did this Law-maker give to Moses (saith he) that thou do all things according to the pattern

close of Gauder
ter. Homil. in
the Acts.

Not but that
we grant a va-
riety in the
method and
manner in
point of cir-
cumstance, so
the substance
be kept, as re-
pentance from
dead works, &c
our Saviour
Jesus Christ
so in Church
government.

Exod 25.40.
Heb. 8.5.

But we do
not say that
the same
things are pre-
scribed under
the Gospel
nor doth it
come to such
circumstan-
ces but we
say, what is
prescribed, is
to be kept.

1. Timoth. 4. 1.
2. Timoth. 4. 1.

1. Timoth. 4. 1.
2. Timoth. 4. 1.

1. Timoth. 4. 1.
2. Timoth. 4. 1.

1. Timoth. 4. 1.
2. Timoth. 4. 1.

1. Timoth. 4. 1.
2. Timoth. 4. 1.

1. Timoth. 4. 1.
2. Timoth. 4. 1.

1. Timoth. 4. 1.
2. Timoth. 4. 1.

1. Timoth. 4. 1.
2. Timoth. 4. 1.

seemed thee in the *Adams*. He must not vary one pin*. But some will say, When the Tribes of Israel were reduced under a king-ly government, as in *Dauids* time, the service of God was in greater state and externall pomp, when the Temple was built, then it was before in the Tabernacle; whereby it may appear, that there was a liberty left to *David* to alter the form of wor-ship so, as was suitable to the Regall state. But I answer, Here was no liberty left to man to alter any thing in the worship of God, or in the Church-government. For God was so exact in this, that he would not leave it to *David* himself, though both a King and a Prophet, and a man after Gods own heart, to set up what worship he pleased in the Temple, but God gave him an exact patterne of all, and that not only by his Spirit, but in writing, that he might neither adde nor omit in the least tittle, 1 *Chron.* 28. And you know it was never left to the Kings of Judah, to do the least thing in point of Reformation, but onely to see, that the Priests do all strictly, (not any thing as seem- ed good to them, but all) according to the precise rule of the Law, 2 *Chon.* 31. Now was the great Law-giver so strict under the old Testament, and is he grown more remisse under the New? In *Ezekiels* vision of the Temple, or Church in the time of the Gospel, *Ezek.* 43. 10, 11. wee reade of a patterne, form, fashion of everie particular thing of the House of God, which is his Church, exactly set down, and measured by Gods own speciall direction. Or are men more wise and more faith- full now then *David* was, that Christ should trust every Nation with such a liberty as this, to alter and diversifie Church-govern- ment and Discipline, so as might be most agreeable to this or that Kingdom, Common-weales, Countreys customs, commodity, conve- nience? And as for your Nationall Church here mentioned, we shall take a just measure of it when we come to your ninth Que- stion.

And whereas you quote in the Margine, 1 *Cor.* 14. 40. & 11. 34. on which you ground your liberty to form your Church- government & Discipline suitable to each particular Civill gov- ernment: Alas, brother, these very Scriptures our Prelates abud- ed to maintain their unlimited liberty of setting up their rites and ceremonies, as suitable to the Civil government, which ab- surdity

furdity I have fully refuted in my *Reply to Cantuaries Relation*. Whereas the Apostle there exhorteth, *when all things be done decently and in order*, according to those rules they had received of him: to which agreeth the other place alledged by you, *Other things will I set in order when I come*, as Titus 1. 5. He left Titus in Crete, *that he might set in order the things that remained*; but all according to the Apostles direction for Church-government, and choice of Officers. And we should have a mad world of it, if civil States in severall Countreys should have liberty to frame Church-government and Discipline, as should most sute with their particular conditions. This liberty is that which both Ecclesiasticall and Civil States usurping, turned the spirituall Kingdom of Christ over Consciences and Churches into a temporal and secular Kingdom, or rather indeed an Anti-christian Tyranny, or Hierarchy, so as by this means it came to passe, that the *second Beast* ascending out of the earth, to wit, the Pope, (Revel. 13. 11.) commands the inhabitants of the earth to make an image, that is, to set up a forme of Religion and Church-government, suitable to the Image of the first Beast, to wit, the Imperiall State of Rome. And thus came to be erected the Hierarchieall Church-government, in all pomp and points suitable with the Romane Monarchy. So dangerous is that libertie which brings such bondage. According to that, *Licentia sumit omnes de vires*: this brings not liberty, but licentiousnesse.

Your second Question is: *Whether if any Kingdome or Nation shall by a National Council, Synod and Parliament, upon serious deliberation, establish a publick Church-government, Rites, Discipline, as they conceive to be most consonant to Gods Word, to the Lawes, Government under which they live, and manners of their people, and then faste them by a general Law; all particular Churches, members of that Kingdome and Nation, be not therefore actually obliged in point of conscience and Christianity, readily to submit thereto, and no wayes to seek an exemption from it, under pain of being guilty of arrogance, schisme, contumacy, and liable to such penalties as are due to those of sinners.*

I answer: That is, *Whether the Kingdome and Nation of England.* The summe is, you would here make way for a politicall State Church-government, or a mixed Church-government,

* 1 Cor 14.
32. 33.
Rom. 13. 1, 2.
1 Pet. 3. 13.
14. 15.
1 Cor. 10. 31.
33.

partly, according to Gods word; and partly to the Laws and customs
 under which we live; and partly, to the manners of the people
Humano capiti carcerem iungere equinam. Or, popularit
 placens &c. Truly, brother, your very question is hereticall, you
 must pardon the expression, which otherwise would not come
 home to the full truth. And your word *Else*, imports no lesse.
 For *Else* taken in that sense, as you here apply it, to set up a
 form of Religion, of Church-government, and Discipline, with Rites
 and ceremonies suitable to the Laws and customs of a State, and man-
 ners of the people, and, **AS MEN CONCEIVE**, is of the
 same signification with *as men*, which signifieth a taking up an
 heretic upon humane election, or, as you say, *As they conceive*. For
 you say not, Such a Church-government, &c. as is most consonant to
 Gods word; but such as they conceive to be most consonant to
 Gods word; but hang your Church-government upon mens conceit, or opinion of
 consonancy with Gods word, and not upon a real and essentiall
 consonancy. Just like the Prelate of Canterbury, who in his *Rela-
 tion* hangs the credit of the Scripture upon the Author, and
 for his wisdom saith he (saith he) of his sufficiency. Which I have no-
 ted in my Reply. But thus you open a wide sluice, to let in an
 ocean of inundation of all sorts of Religion into all parts of
 the world, when every Religion shall be measured by the line
 of mans conception, what men **CONCEIVE** agreeable to Gods
 word. Thus might Henry 4. the late French King (to make his
 way the easier to the Crown through so many difficulties) spo-
 leaving from the Protestant Religion, and turn to Popery, as con-
 ceiving it fittest to the word of God, to comply with the State of
 France, and the manners of the people, for the establishing of
 his kingdom (as he conceived though he was deceived) by be-
 coming himself a Popish King. And so Jeremiah with his Coun-
 sell might **CONCEIVE** it agreeable enough to Gods word, to set
 up his *Calves* most suitable to the new Laws and customs of that
 State, and to the manners of the people, who are apt enough to em-
 brace idolatry and superstition, as *Ephraim willingly walked after
 the commandment*, Hos 3. 11. And so in the rest. Now that is an he-
 resie which is an error conceived and maintained against the
 word of God. That the maintaining of such a liberty as you as-
 sume here is so, we have in part shewed already from the Scrip-
 ture,

Government of the State under which we live, be good and just, there is no need why you should put upon Christs kingly Government in his Church, such hard conditions, as not to be admitted; but so faire as it is consonant to mans Laws. As Tertullian said, when upon the Emperour Tiberius his motion to the Romane Senate, that Christ might be admitted and rowled among Romen gods, and the Senate refused, because they had made a Law, that none should be chosen for a god, unless first propounded by the Senate: *Ergo nisi homini placuerit, Deus non erit Deus*; Therefore if it please not man, God shall not be God. So let it be lawfull for me to say; If it please not man, not the Senate, Christ shall not be King, his kingdom shall have no place in this or that Nation. As if the good Laws of a civill State, and the good Laws of Christs kingdom, could not, ought not to stand together in their distinct forms unmixed; when certainly a State stands strongest, while most consonant to Gods Word, and to the Church government and Discipline of Christ, and not when Christs kingdom and Government is made suitable to the Laws and customs of the State.

* Hollinshead,
Description
of Britaine.
Chap. 7. about
the year 187.

Famous was that Answer of Eleutherius, Bishop of Rome, to Lucius King of Britaine, when this Countrey of Britaine first received the faith (being the first Province that received it) where the Gospel began freely to be preached, without impeachment or inhibition of the Prince (as the * Story saith) and that without any ceremonies at all King Lucius sending to Eleutherius for some modell, or form of Church Government and Discipline he received this Answer; *That Christ had left sufficient Order in the Scripture for the Government of the Church; and not only for that, but also for the regiment of his whole Realme, if he would submit himselfe as followeth that Rule. You require of me (saith he) the Romane Ordinances, with the Imperiall Statutes also to be sent unto you, which you desire to practise. The Romane Laws we may find to be faulty, but Gods Laws never. You have received of late through Gods mercy, in the Realme of Britaine, the law and faith of Christ; you have with you both volumes of the Scriptures: Out of them therefore by Gods grace, and the counsell of your Realm, take you a law, and by that law through Gods assistance rule your kingdom. Now this Eleutherius being the 14. Bish. of Rome, by Plaines account, it shews unto us*

the

the great difference between that, and after-times, wherein the Mystery of Iniquity grew up to its height, in assuming such an unlimited liberty to set up such a Church-Government, and ceremonies of humane Invention, as were haled in by the head and shoulders. But brother *Primmer*, you see here, how in those purer primitive times, even the Bishop of Rome himselfe was so farre from admitting a Church-Government suitable to the severall lawes and customes of every Nation, (as you would have it) as he tels King *Lucius*, he hath both the Testaments, by the rule whereof he should not onely see the Church to be governed, but his own Realme also. Ergo, the singly government of Christ in his Church is not to be fashioned and moulded according to the lawes and customes of temporall and civill States, but contrarily the lawes of Civill States are to be reduced to the rule of Gods Word.

But you adde also, *And manners of their people*: that is, in their severall Countries, and Common-weales. Surely this reflects mine eye upon that Reformation begun in King *Edward*s reigne. But now what Church-Government and Discipline was to be set up? Why, the manners of the people must be the line and plummet to regulate this building by. The people of England had beene so long rooted in a superstitious Egyptian soyle: but because fat, and filling their flesh-pots with Onions and Garlick, they could the better brook the burthens which their Task-masters the Prelates inured their shoulders withall. And withall they must have their Masse-Service, though translated out of the Roman into the English language. This in King *Edward*s letter to the Cornishmen, standing up for their Masse-book, stilled the babes when they understood the English Service-booke was no other then the Romish Masse clad in an English weed, though since it hath put off many of those ragges, but not all it should. So much it importeth, to have an eye to the peoples manners, and how they stand affected. When the Lord *Cromwell* had set forth the *Primmer*, or *Psalter*, without the *Litany*, all the Popishly affected, which were not a few, could not be quiet till they had cried up the *Litany* again into its old place. So as in fine, through the love of superstition in the people, and the love of the world in the Prelats (as in the Reformers, many of whom afterwards

* Fox his
Monuments.

wards God reformed and purged in the flames of Martyrdom) such a Reformation was set up, as for Church-government and Discipline (consistently translating the Popes headship, and setting it upon the Kings shoulders) was the very same with that which was in *Henry 8.* his dayes, and is at this day in Rome; and did so well sute with the *Civill Government* and *manner of the people*, that a *Generall Law* was enacted for the ratifying of that *Prelaticall Government and Discipline*, which hath bred such *manner* in the people generally to this day, as if another Reformation shall be set up, wherein the *peoples manner* shall be no lesse looked upon, then in the former (as you here doe more then seeme to plead for) I can conjecture, if not certainly divine, what a Reformation both for *Church-Government and Discipline*, your *Church of England* is like to have. For if you aske the Prelaticall party, consisting of multitudes of their Priests, and of their ignorant and prophane people, together with all the Kings Army, they will all with one voyce and vote, roare it out at the Canons mouth, We will have the Bishops Church-government and Discipline continued without alteration. If ye aske the ordinary Protestants professors at large, they cry, No, no; not that; but we will have such a Church-government, as under which we may enjoy no lesse libertie for our *manner*, then we had under the Prelates.

But you referre us to the *serious debate of a Nationall Council, Synod, Parliament*. But yet give us leave to put a vast difference between all these, and the Scripture, Christs owne voyce: If they truly inform us of the minde of Christ in the Scripture, we will blisse God for it: but yet if we can find out the mind of Christ by his immediate voyce, we dare not suspend our beliefs and practise of it, untill we have it at the second hand from men. And should we waite ever so long upon the issue of their debate, commended unto us to be such, as men *cannot* to be agreeable and *consonant* to Gods Word: yet for as much as we dare not *pinne our soules upon mens sleeves, as not knowing (as one said) whither they might possibly carry them: therefore we must examine all mens determinations in matters of Religion by *searching the Scripture, and laying every thing to this line and rule. For the *Berens* are contemned, as the more noble; in that they examined diligently and daily, even the Apostles doctrine

Camdens
Remains.
*A. 17. 11.

doctrine by the Scriptures: and much more are we to try the spirits of men, that are not Apostles, and so not immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost with infallibility of truth, as were any Generall Council after the Apostles hath been. So as you know, how miserably and shamefully Generall Councils have erred. The first Council of *Nice*, consisting of 318. Bishops, how did they all agree to bring in a Doctrine of Devils, prohibiting Priests marriage, had not one Confessor, *Paphnutius*, by evidence of Scripture and reason, cryed it down, and so swayed the whole Council? And you know very well, that Generall Councils, as well as Nationall, have not infallibilitie of judgement in all things. And it cannot be unknowne to you, that even this Assembly of Divines are of different judgements about Church-government and Discipline; nor have they perhaps had so much time since their being under the Prelacy, as to be thoroughly informed of the way of Churches, commonly called *Independent*, but that many of them may possibly gaine much more knowledge of it, by spending some more time and study in it.

But Sir, besides all this, you seeme to leade them such a way, (should they follow you) as would necessarily bring them into an inevitable and inextricable error, in case they should ~~lose~~ such a *publik Church-government, Rules, Discipline, as they conceive to be most consonant to Gods word, to the Lawes, Government under which we live, and manner of the people.* For if they looke upon the manner of the people, which they must needs finde to be for the most part very loose (to speake nothing of Ignorants and Popish Malignants) some men might *conceive*, that such a *Church-government and Discipline* were most *suitable*, as doth most comply with, and give some indulgence to such manners, as cannot easily be brought to enter in at the *straight gate, and narrow way*, that leades into Christs Kingdome. And whatsoever *Church-government and Discipline* comes not full home in all things to the word of God, is not that which is consonant thereunto, and so not pleasing unto God, and the more *consonant it is to Gods Word, the more stritt and holy it will be found to be*, and so the less *consonant to the common prophane manners of this Nation at this day.* Worthy of our observation is that of the Lord to the Prophet *Jeremy, Jerem. 17. 19. If thou take forth the precious from*

the will, then shall be as my mouth; let them return unto thee, but re-
turn not unto them. In heed upon the most learned, Interpre-
tation of the learned Beza, constant styles him) *Calvin*, among
many other excellent observations on this place, thus conclud-
eth, *Sitima est, veritatem Dei non debere flecti ad hominum ar-
bitrium, quod Deus non mutatur, ita nec verbum eius ullam varieta-
tem admittit*. The summe is; That the truth of God ought not to
be altered according to mans will or conceit; because God is
immutable; so neither doth his Word admit of any change.
Now the forme of Church government and Discipline laid
downe in the New Testament, is a Doctrine of Christ, and no
more alterable according to the varieties of mens customs and
manners in all nations and ages, then the Gospel it selfe is;
which the Apostle would not have to be altered into another
Gospel; though another Gospel cannot bee, as neither another
kingdome of Christ, another Church government, another
Church discipline ought not to be, but that alone which we find
in Gods Word, which must not be reduced or conformed (as a
nose of waxe, to which the Papists, as *Hosius*, and *Episcopus* doe
compare the Scripture) to the fashions of worldly governments,
(*Rom. 12. 2.*) and popular manner; but these must be conformed
to the Scripture.

Hence it may appeare, how rough your conclusion of this
Question is, if to such a generall law, as you propose, all parti-
cular Churches, members of this Kingdome and Nation, should
not yett to be actually obliged in point of conscience, and Chris-
tianities, and ready to submit therunto, and so waite to take an ex-
emption from it, under paine of being guilty of arrogancy, schisme,
dissimulacy, and liable to such penalties, as are due to those officers;
Good Brother, be not so legall. What if that resolution of an as-
sembly, and that Generall Law for the confirmation of it, be such,
as the conscience of godly people cannot without sinne submit
therunto? Must they either violate their consciences, or be un-
done by your unavoidable intolerable penalties, as both to suf-
fer in their good names for *Arrogancy, contumacious, Schismatics,*
yet and in their Conscience, under the guilt of *disobedience*, and to be
liable to I wot not what penalties besides? and so waite to
take an exemption from it? Why, good Brother, if we should goe
and

and live under the Turkish Government, and could not in conscience turne Turkes in the Religion thereby Law established, yet there is a way to seek an Exemption from it, namely, by becoming Tributary to that State, as many Christians doe.

Good Brother let's not have any of *Dr. Williams* Lawes executed upon Innocents. And remember how not long agoe the Prelates served us, we could not have the benefit of Law, of Appeals, no exemption from bloud-letting, and eare-cropping, and pillorying, &c. And shall wee now turne worse persecutors of the Saints, then the Prelates were? *Non igitur a malis miseris succurrere disco*, saith that heathen Princeesse.

But in the margin you put some places of Scripture to prove this. But truly, when I will view the places, I find them not to answer to what you would seeme to prove by the Quotation. The first is, *1 Cor. 14. 32, 33* For the Spirit of the Prophets is subiect to the Prophets. And what of this? Ergo, the Spirit of all the Prophets in England must be subiect to the Prophets in the Assembly upon paine of being guilty of Arrogancy, Schisme, Contumacy, and liable to such penalties, as are due to these offences. O brother Primate, you must as well note, as quote the place. But let me note it for you. The Apostle there speaks both to, and of the Church of Corinth, when assembled together in one place, that the Prophets should observe order, and give place each to utter in Prophecying, as the reason is rendered; and not of any such Assembly, or that sublimed and supreme Authority, or the onely Prophets, to whom all other Prophets, where ever dispersed, must be subject. *1 Cor. 14. 33* For God is not the Father of confusion, but of peace, as in all Churches of the Saints. Which place also is no lesse wide from your purpose. What? Will there be no peace, but all confusion, unless all be subiect to the Assembly upon such paine, as before? The Apostle speaks here of the Order to be observed in every Church, as in all the Churches of the Saints. The other places quoted by you, are no lesse misapplied. Will they prove, trow you, blind obedience?

But come in brother, if you will needs put us upon such hard exigns, as to give us no quarter, without present saying down our Armes and cause, and so captivating our consciences to the Dicta and Decrees of them; if you will make

2 Sam. 11. 2.

no covenant with us, but upon this one onely condition, that you might thrust out all our right eyes; and if there be no other remedy, yet give us leave to capitulare with you about some terms of accommodation, that wee may not altogether betray our consciences and liberties, which our Redeemer Christ hath so dearly purchased for us. And the first and maine is this: First brother, make it cleare unto us, that an Assembly of men *learned, pious*, what you will, living in ages succeeding the Apostles, have, or ever had, infallibility of judgement, so as to say, (as Act 15. 28.) *It pleased the Holy Ghost and Vs.* to make their Decrees, that so wee may without further scruple of conscience, submit and conforme therunto. But (I say) you must give us very good assurance and evidence hereof, that they are infallibly guided by the Holy Ghost, that when they shall say, *It pleased the Holy Ghost and Vs.* we may safely beleieve them. For when you can resolve us of their conclusions no further, then as they *conceive to bee consonant to the word of God*: Alas! Sir, you leave us in a Wood, or Maze, whence no extricating of our selves, without *Ariadnes* thread, Gods word, to set us where we were before. For you know what variety of conceits many men have, *Quæ capia, nec sententia*. This is the first and maine condition we stand upon; and truly it were sufficient alone. We might in a second rancke (but not equall to the former) name a selfe-deniall, and humble spirit, &c. You know the story of the Monkes of Bangor comming before *Austin* the first Arch-bishop of Canterbury, whom they setting to sit in his Pontificall Chaire, and not rising up, nor mooving unto them, they left him as a man not sent of God: And so, if wee should behold men carrying themselves loftily over their brethren, who are not of their counsell, we should be apt to suspect that Christs Spirit is not there, because there is not the spirit of humility, neither the Spirit of truth to be found. A Cardinal in the Conclave at *Viterbium*, after almost three yeares agitation about the election of a new Pope, (as many yeares as wee have been about to set up a Reformation, and the foundation not yet laid) each Cardinall ambitiously aspiring to be the Pope, one of them rose up and said, *Domine, &c.* let us uncover the roofe of this Chamber, seeing the Holy Ghost cannot get in unto

us thorough so many tiles. But this by the way. And so enough of this question.

The third and fourth Questions.

I come now to your third and fourth question. But least my answers may prove too voluminous, and so fastidious to every-day newes Readers. I shall in the rest contract my selfe. And this I must doe by trussing up your questions within the list of a Sylogisme, respectively. For (as I noted before) all your questions are rather conclusive then interrogatory rather positive resolutions, then unresolved questions. The summe therefore of your third and fourth question (for this dependeth on that) is reduced into this Sylogisme:

That which hath sufficient (if not best) warrant for it in the Proposition. New Testament, the examples of the primitive Church, &c. most prevents heresies, schismes, injustice; is to bee received as a true and undoubted Church-Government, and to be preferred before that, which hath no such expresse warrant in Scripture, no patterne for it in the primitive, or best reformed Churches, &c.

But the Presbyteriall forme of Church-government, if rightly ordered, hath sufficient (if not best) warrant for it in the New Testament, &c. The Independent not so.

Assumption, which takes up the fourth question, Conclusion.

Therefore the former is to bee preferred and received before the latter, without any long debate.

The Answer.

Both your Propositions are lame and interfere one against the other. Sufficient (if not best) warrant, will not prove so sufficient a warrant, as if there be found a better. And so your Argument, by crossing shifts with it selfe, falleth to ground. Again, your Presbyteriall government hath neither best; nor any sufficient warrant, as we judge, in the New Testament; no nor any warrant at all in Gods word. But the true forme of Church-government hath both sufficient, and (without comparison) best warrant in the Scripture. And in truth, whereas you oppose

presbyteriall and Independent (as you call it) one against the other; let me tell you, that that which you call Independent, is the onely true, originall, and primitive Presbyteriall. Which Presbytery is proper and peculiar to every particular Church of Christ: and is not a Presbytery collective of many Churches by way of jurisdiction one, or many over each, or of a Nationall Church, as you terme it. For neither of these can you find either in the New Testaments, or in the Old. In the old we read of one Church, to wit, that of the Nation of the Jewes: But that whole Church was one intire congregation, Act. 7. 38. they had one Church officer over all, it is called the Tabernacle of the congregation in the singular; and they all assembled three times in the yeare at Jerusalem, in the Temple, where they offered Sacrifice, and not else where: So as the Church was a type of every particular Church of Christ under the New Testament, as being both one intire Church and absolute, subject to no other form of government, but only that of the only Law-giver and Mediator Jesus Christ; and no pattern of any such Nationall Church, as you would have. Every particular Church now, consisting of visible Saints, is under Christ, as the onely Head, King, Governour, Law-giver of it, and so is subject to no other jurisdiction then that of Christ, his Spirit, his Word. Were there none other particular Church in the world, then one, as that of *Abrahams* Family, should it not be a compleat Church, untill there were other Churches on whose jurisdiction it should depend; though for ordinary Families, they cannot have such a number as is requisite to make up a ministeriall body, & so are bound to unite to others for this end. Wee hold communion and confociation of Churches for counsell in doubt, and comfort in distresse; but we deny any such combination of Churches, as whereby the true liberty of every particular Church is taken away. And this communion of Churches doth no lesse (if not more) prevent *Heresies*, *Schismes*, *Injustice*, then your Presbyteriall. Nor can you shew reason to the contrary. And yet would you have our Churches more perfect then those of the Apostles own planting and gathering, as to be altogether exempted from *Heresies*, *Schismes*, *Injustice*? Did not the Apostles tell the Church of Corinth, *There must bee Heresies even*

among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest. And could those Primitive Churches after the Apostles, preserve themselves from Heresies? How soone did the whole world groane and wonder, that it was become an *Arian*? And this within the fourth Century after the birth of Christ, when the Churches were governed by the Bishops and their Presbyteries. And how soone did the Kingdom of the Beast mount up to such a height, as it overtopt all the Western Churches, and brought them under his dominion?

And for our truly and properly Presbyterian Churches (your Independents), to which you deny expresse warrant in Scripture, the whole New Testament is both an expresse and ample witness on our side. All those particular Churches which the Apostles planted, were all of absolute authority amongst themselves respectively, and equall one to the other. You can shew unto us no rule or example to the contrary. That in A.C. 15. is transcendent, and stands alone, not to be paralleld, and therefore very impertinently objected by many, before you, as wee shall have occasion to shew afterwards.

And for pattern in the Primitive Churches after the Apostles, we are not curious to seeke it in the corrupt current of succeeding ages, when we find it the pure fountaine. It appeares, say the *Centurists*, *Cent. 1. 7. Tit. de consecratione Eccles.* that the Government of Churches in the second hundred year, was almost popular, every Church had equal power of ordaining or casting out, if neede were, those Ministers they had ordained, with other things very materiall in that whole Title, as also in the Title *de Synodis privatis*. And for the best reformed Churches, if in them we cannot finde that patterne so fully followed as the Scripture holds forth unto us, wee crave leave without prejudice, so take in as wee finde it in the Word, without the least variation. And you may know, in the beginning of Protestant Reformation, could they so clearly see in the dawning, as wee may now in the meridian, if we will but open our eyes? The reformed Churches have taken up one or other of them upon the matter the maine things we contend for. The Church of Holland receive none to the Table, nor have a vote as a member of that Church; but such as first give satisfaction to the Eldership,

and

and then to the Congregation: and 2. have a forme of covenant propounded by them. Secondly, the French Churches exercise excommunication in their particular congregations, though with liberty of appeale. And this was the Governement of the Primative Churches in the 2^d hundreth yeare, as appeares, *Cenr. 2. c. 7. Tir. de Synodus*: but especially, *Tir. de consecratione Eccles.* So as no long debate neede to be, if but Christs word alone may take place, without the necessary accommodation of humane *Laws, Customs, Manners of the people*, as you doe plead.

And lastly for apeales in case of injustice, you know, brother, that if injustice be done in any civill matter, if redresse may not be had by the mediation of the Court, whereof the parties are members, the Law is open there to appeale for justice. And if it bee about the Churches censure for some miscarriage of a member towards the Church or any member thereof, if the censure bee unjust, the party grieved may desire to have his cause heard by some other Churches, who may accordingly deal with their Sister church to require a brotherly account of the whole businesse, as is the duty of all the Churches in such cases. And if it be in matter of opinion, here the appeale lies principally and in the first place, to the Scripture, as the supreme judge: & if the things be obscure, & too hard for that Church to resolve by the Scripture, then to call in the helpe of other Churches for their best information. And in summe, brother, there is no case can fall out in any Church, which hath not as many helpes by a free communion of Churches, wherein every Churches peculiar liberties and priviledges are preserved as they ought to be: as any you can name to bee in your obligatorie combination of Churches, whereby the liberty of each church is by comon consent sold over to others, by which it ceaseth now to be a free Church of Christ, under his onely jurisdiction and governement. So as hereby great mischiefs may redound even to the purest Church, when once things come to bee carried by the vote of a generall or Classicall Assembly of Divines, swaying things besides the Rule, and stretching them beyond their line. And therefore famous was that saying of *Nazianzen*, *That he never saw any good to come of generall Councils, because commonly Camellion-like they change their hue with the nearest object, complying with the condition

* See also Nicolas de Clemangus, super materia Concilii generalis, circa initium. Non oportet nos Ecclesie triumphantis, Ecclesie ritulos ascribere, ne infallibilis sit, &c.

of the present times, and state: it suppoſe Prelatical Spi-
rit ſhould turne to be your Presbyterian, or as when the
Lord Churche ſhall ſettle his Kingdome upon his Churches in Gen
will ſay, you ſhould perhaps be ſome of your Presbyterians as
ſay to ſettle Independently, were the preferments ſtable.

But ſome may object, that one Church depending by it ſelfe *Object.*
is more ſubject to fall into errour, then when combined with
other Churches.

To which I answer; That every particular Church enjoying *Anſw.*
its own freedom, without any injoynd combination with other
Churches, may much longer preſerve it ſelfe from danger of
errour, when it hath its free choiſe in matters of difference
or diſſent, to conſult onely with thoſe churches, which it
knowes to be moſt ſound and orthodox, then when it is ſett bound
and incipled with this or that combination of Churches, being
in number twelve or twenty, or more or leſſe, whole votes mult
carry every controverſie, according to the ſeverall humours of
ſuch and ſuch, at an adventure. And (brother *Pyman*) the world
is not ſo plentiful of ſound ſpirits, as to ſupplie every hundred
in the Land with twelve or twenty able and good Miniſters
to be of a combination. Nay, you may obſerve what poore ſites
are met for ſupplying of places with godly and able Miniſters,
where are growne to ſay, that the City now is ſett to be
ſupplied with plaudered country miniſters, in ſtead of their own
call Malignants: And ſuppoſe all thoſe to be good as
they ſhould be, where ſhall thoſe country places be ſupplied?
And beſides, ſuch is the penurie of good Miniſters (if not of care
to provide better, ſuppoſe) that ſuch as are for their countries
cant out of one place, are (for I was not what merits) put
upon ſome other people, where their good qualities are not known.
Being ſuch as verſe the proverb, *Our Towne and ſome*
the change their ſentences, but not their manners.
And beſides all this, ſee is one very mealy gift now, ſayes
that will be wooed and won to take a ſervice under a hundred
or ſcore pounds. And brother, why ſhould godly Miniſters
indeed be yoked with ſuch eſch-wormes and Maggots, as are
in ſome Parishes, and as ſome of your Presbyterians and
others would neceſſitate us unto? If you ſay, it things go amiſſe

in lesser Classes, they may be remedied in a generall Assembly: then I say, there is the like reason of a generall Assembly, that there is of all the severall classes put together. For, *coram & per totum* endem *est* *coram* in the members be corrupt, so also must the whole body be. Therefore the rule must needs be hard, when one or two Churches in a class or combination, that are sound, should be bound to the decisions of the rest being unsound; and so for a generall Assembly in like proportion.

The fifth Section

It is reduced thus:

position.

That, whose grounds and reasons tend inevitably to danger, overthrow, and embroyle Ecclesiastick or civill forme of Government, ought not to be suffered.

Assumption.

But such is the independent church-government: it tends inevitably, &c. Therefore it ought not to be suffered.

I deny the Assumption: The grounds and reasons of true church-government, do not in their own nature tend to the endangering, overthrowing, and embroyling of Ecclesiastick or civill formes of Government (*Herm. confess. test. 11. of the confess. of Augus. art. 2.*) Power Ecclesiastick no more hindereth the civill, then the skill of musick, neither is it to be confounded with civill. And *1612*. They, to wit, the Prelates, transforme the church into a humane Government. For they would doe all in imitation of Civill Government. But if they produce any such effect, it is onely accidentall, and the maine cause is in such Ecclesiastick or civill bodies, when they show some sympathy in their constitution to Christs Kingdom and Government, by their oppressing or oppressing of it. Hereupon Christ saith: *I think not that I am come to send peace on the earth*

I came not to send peace, but a sword. And it was the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, both by Christ, and his Apostles, for which they were excommunicated, and persecuted, and troubles of the state, both Ecclesiastick and Politick. *At meane of sedition, and perturbations of the people, and the like.* And will you therefore conclude, that the preaching of the Gospel, and Kingdom of Christs Kingdom in his Churches, is a trouble of the

Apostles, came to be charged from being first Churches, to become servile and subject to the usurpation of the greater; the Prelates and their clergy now making up the Church, as if the congregations themselves were no Churches; as being stripped of all their Rights and Privileges, yet said of Christ their King, his Kingdome now being turned into an Oligarchy, of Oligarchy Tyranny, mixed of two of the worst forms of Government; though you seem to put Oligarchy in the rank of the best; but I suppose you would have said, instead of Oligarchy, (having named Monarchical, and Aristocratick) Democratick; Oligarchy being Heterogeneous to the other two. But enough of this.

The second Question is, Whether the Provinciall, Diocessall, Parochiall, and other Church-governments, would reduce the Church to a more servile government, than that which it had before.

Thus reduced; These Churches, which do not conform their Church-government to some one or other publick forme of Civil Government, dividing themselves into many Parochiall Churches, Diocessall Provinces, but doe gather Churches not out of infidels, but of men already converted to, and settled in the Christian faith, and doe admit them into the Church by way of Covenant; no one example, nor direct Scripture Reason, or Authority can be produced, to satisfy conscience of the lawfulness of them.

But such are the Independent Churches, they do not conform as afore; therefore conscience cannot be satisfied of the lawfulness of them.

The Argument (or Question) contains many branches, I care not to reduce to one head; but I have handled them in one word, as well as I could. And for answer, first this question is coincident with all that went before, and so is already in that respect answered. Secondly, Your parallel between the civil association and Ecclesiastick, is not grounded on Scripture. For neither God taught, neither the Churches practised any such necessarie union and dependance of one Church on another, though they might have done it, and had need of it, it being in times of persecution (which hindered it not) a necessary charity in some places now.

You confidently affirm, that all Ecclesiastick Histories containe

in the jurisdiction of these Churches

to much, which is manifestly untrue, as hath been shewed before. Though churches springing out of other churches had dependence on them, what is this to churches that are farre distant one from another, and never had such a ground of relation one to another? Besides the Harmonie of confessions, which you quote for you, (though I finde not that in those places they say any thing to the point) I yet see in cap. of the R. 40. that the R. 40. are committed to each particular, even the least Ecclesiasticall Society. Thirdly, Christs true churches here on earth, are not to be limited to this or that place, as is shewed before: there are so many Parishes, Dioceses, Provincially distinct, therefore those must be so many fixed, Parochiall, Diocesan, Provinciall churches. And here, Brother Prymer, would reduce (*sarquam ex postliminio*) the Provinciall, Diocesan, Parochiall church-government, to the same forme it had before? Would you have the Provinciall Archbishops, with their Diocesan Bishops, and Parochiall clergy, or Priests set up againe? For a Province hath relation to its Provinciall, and a Diocesse to its Diocesan, and a Parish to its Parochiall, (in the old Dislett) into its Parishi Priest. *De villis* 75. 116. And as for division of Provinces, Dioceses and Parishes into so many churches, you know where and when it began. For in the year 367, Gregory Bishop of Rome made this division, which division turned the churches into a Babylonish confusion, when now all that dwell together in every Parish, and so in every Diocese, who ever they were, Tag, and Tag, must make up a Church, as so many members of one body: whereas the churches planted by the Apostles, were called and gathered out of the wide world, where the Word of God came, and took place: so is not every fidee became a church, but so many as were called in every citie, writes not small in *Gen. 28*, but the church there consisting of the Saints only, *vers. 21* of *Gen. 28*, noted how and how.

But you object the gathering of churches, not of individuals, but of men already converted, and settled in the Christian faith, of which forme of congregating churches, you say you could never discern example, on any of these scriptures, or in the confessions. We would gladly have answered that objection, that the whole Nation is Christian, established in the faith, but if not, you dispute *ex fidei suppositione* May in please you then, brother,

to take notice of the example both of *John Baptist* and of *Christ* himselfe, and of the *Apostles*, who all of them did call and gather Christian churches out of the *Jewes* church: which might suffice to satisfy any mans conscience in this point: and so much the more, when they consider this is a time of Reformation, and we have all taken a covenant each to go before other in reforming on onely our selves, but all others within our line according to the word of God. And again, the case between our Reformation at this time, and that of the *Jewes* church, is much alike: For as that was the Gospell Reformation, so is this: as that was a gathering of such churches out of that of the *Jewes*, as acknowledged *Christ* to be their onely King and Law-giver, to governe consciences and churches, by his Word, when the rest of that church, even the main body of it, did reject *Christ*, and renounce him for their King, this being the very Title set over him, on his Crosse, for which they crucified him: So the preaching up of *Christ*s Kingdome in those dayes, is that which calleth and gathereth those unto *Christ*, who acknowledge him alone for their King to governe them; and this out of those, that do not, or will not submit unto his Kingly government, but depend upon the sole determination of men, what kinds of Church Government they will set up in the Land; which you tell us must be *saile to the lawes and customes of the Realm, and manners of the people.*

Mat. 3. 6
Iob. 4. 5. 1.
Acts 2. 40.

But there is yet one thing more, for which you say, you can see no ground, and that is particular Church government. Why, brother, why should the lawfulness of this be doubted, whether explicit or implicit? Is it the churches wisdom and estate, yes, conscience and duty too, as wee humbly conceive to admit of none but such as can give some account of the worke of grace wrought in them, though but in the least degree, yet in truth, so far as we may discern them to be Saints: for such onely are fit members of a church, or body of *Christ*, so as to partake of those holy Ordinances of *Christ*, which none but visible Saints ought to partake of. And who are fit to receive Seales of the Covenant, but such as profess to be in covenant? And surely if any shall refuse to make this profession of their being in covenant, as being ashamed thereof, with what conscience can the church

dislike it, they are only such as take a disgust of the way it
 follows, and then no man will if every thing about it be questioned
 and questioned, though no other reason can be given of it, but a
Nolunt: such as the Jews gave when they said of Christ,
Nolunt: "We will not have this man's rule over us." Which
 speech was the more notorious, as being delivered by an *Ex-
 cellency*, a solemn set of State of the Eldership, and they his own
 Citizens, though a little after (ver. 17) he declares them his e-
 nemies, and for this very thing, that they would not hee should
 reign over them, commandeth them to be brought and laide
 before him. But this by the way, though not unworthy of wise
 men's observation.

* Luko 19. 14.
 Na & qm
 mas.

Objct. But it will be said, wee have covenanted already in
 the Nationall Covenant.

Ans. This is against things upon supposition, that we were
 convinced of the evill of them, but not about our own persons,
 as enquiring whether we indeed are willing to give up our
 selves to the Lord Jesus. 2. This was pit in by such outward au-
 thority, that many for feare tooke it, which a Church covenant
 under the Gospell (where the people are to be free as come wil-
 lingly) will not beare, for under the Law indeed there was ano-
 ther order, but appointed by God, that they might be forced to
 the covenant, that they had received in their fathers: but our
 fathers were over-awed, and secondly, no such order now.

The eighth Question is thus: *Whether the*

This question, though somewhat involved and perplexed
 with many branches, yet the scope being to prove a Nationall
 Church, and so a common Presbyterian Classicall government,
 in which particular congregations persons ought to be subor-
 dinate, and thereby an apparent subversion of the *NOVEL* In-
 dependent invention. (These are your words.)

The whole I reduce into form thus:

Where there be infallible proofes of Nationall Churches,

there necessity must be a common Presbyterian, Classicall

government, to which particular congregations, persons ought

to be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the *NOVEL*

INDEPENDENT INVENTION.

Proposition.

A vindication of the Church of England,

Church admit them into fellowship? And yet know this is a
time of Reformation, and wee have long been under a yoke of
Antichristian government, and of humane ordinances in the
worship of God; whereas we have all violated our vow and co-
venant made in our names in our Baptisme. Now, doth not rea-
son require, that we should renew our covenant in our own per-
sons, when we come to enter into the way of Reformation, and
that in as full a manner as possible we can? And when the peo-
ple of God came out of Babylon to inhabit Jerusalem again,
they made a covenant among themselves, when seeking the way
with these words, *hiser mach, they say, Come and let us join our selves
to the Lord in a perpetuall covenant, this shall we be forgotten.* The
case is now in a government, whoate howe inquiring *hiser mach*
Span, with my face, hiser mach, and shall we be ashamed to come
to sign from all the reliques of Babylon, and not incite one ano-
ther, as they did, to enter into a perpetuall covenant with the
Lord Christ, as our onely King not to be forgotten? And the
like we made, Bara. 1. 10. 15. and Nehem. 10. 28. So did King *Asa*,
2 Chron. 15. 12. Now if any require an example herof in the
New Testament, I answer, what needest, when we have it in the
Old? What example have wee in the New Testament for
baptizing of Infants? Yet having a commandement in the Old
for circumcising the Infants of believing *Abraham*, as being in-
cluded in the same covenant with faithfull *Abraham*, the intalle
of this covenant never yet cut off, but reaching to all *Abrahams*
seed, walking in the steps of *Abrahams* faith now under the Gos-
pel; infants of believing parents professing to bee in covenant,
have the same right unto baptism; as being within the cove-
nant, which the infants of believing *Abraham* had unto circum-
cision (in stead whereof baptism by Gods institution suc-
ceeded) and this by a strict charge and command from God (Gen.
17. 13. 14.) which is as strong now for baptizing of Infants of be-
lieving parents, as it was to the infants of believing *Abraham*
for circumcision. Again, what example, yet of precept is there of
giving women the Lords Supper in the New Testament? yet upon
good consequence it is drawn from thence. But this by the
way, and to conclude this point with reason, can any man
bring against this particular Church covenant, that it may doe
discreitly

dissemble it: they are onely such as take a disgust of the way it
 take, and then no marvell if every thing about it be questioned
 and questioned, though no other reason can be given of it, but a
Nolunus: such as the Jewes gave when they said of Christ
Nolunus: *We will not have this man to reign over us.* Which
 speech was the more notorious, as being delivered by an *Em-
 bassage* a solemn set of State of the Eldership, and they his own
 Citizens, though a little after (ver. 19.) he declares them his e-
 nemies, and for this very thing, that they would not see should
 reign over them, commandeth them to be brought and laide
 before him. But this by the way, though not unworthy of wife
 mens observation.

* Luke 19. 14.
 He & apost.
 was.

Obiect. But it will be said, we have covenanted already in
 the National Covenant.

Ans. This is against things upon supposition, that we were
 convinced of the evill of them, but not ours our own persons,
 as enquiring whether we indeed are willing to give up our
 selves to the Lord Jesus. This was put in by such outward au-
 thority, that many for feare tooke it, which a Church covenant
 under the Gospell (where the people are to be free as come wil-
 lingly) will not heare; for under the Law indeed this was an-
 other order, but appointed by God: that they might be forged to
 the covenant that they had received in their fathers: but our
 fathers were over-awed, and secondly, no such order now.

The eighth Question.

This question, though somewhat involved and perplexed
 with many branches, yet the scope being to prove a National
 Church, and so a common Presbyterian-Clasicall government,
 in which particular congregations & persons ought to be subor-
 dinate, and thereby an apparent subversion of the Novell inde-
 pendent invention. (These are your words.)

The whole I reduce into form thus:

Where there be insillible proofes of a National Church,
 there of necessity must be a common Presbyterian-Clasicall
 government to which particular congregations, persons ought
 to be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the NOVEL
 INDEPENDENT INVENTION.

Proposition.

Assumption. But there be infallible proofes of Nationall Churches; as the Catholick Church, the Nationall Church of the Jewes, the Synodall Assembly of the Apostles, Acts 15. who made and sent binding decrees to the Churches, seconded with all Oecumenicall, Nationall, Provinciaall Councils, Synods, and the Church-government; exercised throughout the world in all Christian Realmes, States, from their first reception of the Gospell, till this present; compared with twelve places of Scripture at the least, &c.

Conclusion. Therefore there must be of necessity, a common Presbyterian Classicall government, to which particular Congregations, persons, ought to be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the *Nationall Independent Inventions.*

Now for answer to this large Argument, briefly: And first, to the Proposition. I deny that you can bring any infallible proofes, or one proof, that there either are, or ever have been any Nationall Churches by any other institution, but merely humane, nor any one of divine institution, but only that of the Jewes in the old Testament; and now wholly dissolved: of which we have spoken sufficiently before: And which also was not onely Nationall, but in a manner Oecumenick and universall, as appeares Acts 2. and such therefore as I hope you contend not for now; for then there would be a Pope, as there was an high Priest then, &c. And brother, you must give us leave to stand upon this, as for our lives, that we dare not admit of any Churches, as the true and genuine Churches of Christ, which are not of his owne institution, that is, such as are not called and gathered by the voyce of Christ in his word, and by that Scepter of his swayed; and by that alone Law of his governed. And therefore be intreated, good brother, not to presse upon us such your Churches, whose not onely institution in their severall divisions, but government also in their combinations, is merely humane, and therefore as a house founded on a sand, which against storme cannot stand. You must first be able to found your Nationall Church in the Scripture, or assure your selfe, if a man will build upon it, a common Presbyterian Classicall government, and dwell there, he will bring an old house upon his head, when God shall begin to storm it.

But to come to your petticular instances in the Assumption, for the prooffe of your Nationall Church. The first is, the Catholicke Church throughout the world. What is this to a Nationall Church? Though the Catholick include all the true Churches throughout the world; yet doth it not therefore conclude any Church to be Nationall.

The second instance is, the Nationall Church of the Jewes, and from hence you can conclude as little for your Nationall Churches; as before we have shewed. For bring us any one Nationall, that is one intire Church, or congregation, as that of the Jewes was: or, that is of one family, as that was: or, that is a type of Christs spirituall Kingdome, as that was: or, that is the universall Church of God visible on earth, as that was: or, that is governed by the like lawes, that that was: when your selfe doe confesse, that the government of your Nationall Churches is to be regulated by *humane Lawes, Customs, Manners*, and not by Gods word alone; whereas that of the Jewes was wholly governed by Gods own Law; and not at all by the Lawes of men, untill it came to be corrupted, contrary to the expresse Law of God. And you confesse also, that the government of your Nationall Churches is alterable, according to the *Lawes, Customs, Manners of severall Nations*: whereas the government of the Church of the Jewes was unalterable, till Christ himselfe did put a period to that Oeconomy. In a word, your Nationall Churches are a mixed multitude, consisting for the greatest part of prophane persons, being as a confused lump, whereof there are nine parts of leaven to one of pure flowre, so as the whole is miserably soured, and the flowre made altogether unfavoury: But that of the Jewes, in its naturall and externall constitution, was all holy, * *an holy Nation, a Royall Priesthood, a peculiar People*; * all the congregation holy, every one of them: So as in no one particular, doe your Nationall Churches hold parallell with that of the Jewes, no not in the least resemblance.

Exod. 19. 5, 6.
Numb. 16. 3.

Your third instance is the *Synodall Assembly of the Apostles, Elders, and Brethren at Jerusalem*, Acts 15. who made and sent *Binding Decrees*, to the Churches. And what of this, brother? Therefore Nationall Churches, or generall

Councils, or Provinciaill, have the like power to make and impose binding Decrees, and send them to the Churches? Why, first of all, that Assembly was not any Nationall Church representative. Secondly, neither was it a Generall or Provinciaill Conncell. Thirdly, being an Assembly of the Apostles, with the Elders and Brethren, it could not erre: for the Apostles had infallibility of judgement, being guided by the holy Ghost infallibly, and the Elders and Brethren did assent to their determinations. And was there ever such a Synodicaill Assembly since that? Had ever any Council besides that, infallibility of judgement? Shew it, brother, and then wee will beleeve they may make *Binding Decrees*, and wee will submit unto them. Nay, dare any Assembly of men on earth say, *It seemed good to the holy Ghost, and Us?* That's enough for the black-mouth of blasphemy, the Roman lying Oracle. But in your second thoughts you traverse this * place more largely, which wee shall consider when we come to it. In the mean time, what I have here and before said, may suffice to stay the Readers stomach.

But you adde, All this is seconded with all *Oecumenicall, Nationall, Provinciaill Councils, Synods, and the Church-government throughout the world in all Christian Realmes, States, &c.* Alas, brother, all these put together, are in no sort furable to make a second to that Apostolicall Assembly; they cannot hold the least proportion with it, to make a second to that unsampled sample, though they make never so great a summe.

And whereas you make the up-shot of this your question, *to the apparent subversion of Novell Independent Invention;* (these be your words) we have proved it to be neither mans *Invention*, but Gods own institution, nor *Novell*, as having its foundation in the New Testament; nor yet *Independent*, otherwise then that it depends not upon any humane authority, or jurisdiction out of it self, nor upon any such conformity to humane *lawes, or customs, or manners* of every Nation or people, as you speake of. Neither doe you take away our Argument from the most usual phrase of the Apostles calling the Churches in the plurall, by saying, *Historians often speake of the Churches in England:* for they doe not so speake when they mean the congregations, but the material Temples; but speake of England as one Church when they

understand the people; and there hath not been shewen any dependence of those Churches, as the dependency of the English Churches is knowne.

The ninth Question.

Thus reduced in summe.

- “That liberty which the Apostles had and used in ordaining, *Proposition.*
 “supplying, instituting new Rites, Orders, Canons, &c. for the
 “Churches peace and welfare, they transmitted to posteritie.
 “But the Apostles had and used such liberty, &c. *Assumption.*
 “Therefore the same liberty have all Churches in the world, *Conclusion.*
 “in all ages succeeding the Apostles, in ordaining, supplying,
 “instituting new Rites, Orders, Canons, for the Churches peace
 “and welfare.

I answer to the Proposition: 1. That the Apostles themselves had no other liberties to doe any thing about the calling, planting, ordering, and regulating of Churches. but what they had immediately given them by Christ, and his Spirit. 2. This liberty so given them reached no further; then to those things only which were given them in charge, and which they accordingly, as faithfull Stewards, did practise concerning the Churches. Even as Christ himselfe, being the Son of God, and set over his house, was faithfull in all things, doing nothing, but what he had by speciall Commission and Command from the Father. So as if the Son himselfe, God blessed for ever, took not the liberty to himselfe to doe what himselfe pleased, as Mediator, though as the Sonne he thought it no robbery to be equal with God the Father; but did every thing as he had received commandment from him: how much lesse have the servants of God any liberty to doe what pleaseth them, but that, and those things alone, which they have in command from their Master. If therefore they who profess to succeed the Apostles in their severall generations, will challenge the same liberty, which the Apostles had and used about the Churches of God, they must first of all shew us their immediate Commission from Christ, as the Apostles had. Secondly, They must all shew us, that what they doe in Church-matters, under colour and pretence of Apostolical liberty, is

none other, but what they have by expresse command from Christ by his Spirit. And thirdly, because they are not able to shew this, they must use their liberty no further, then the lists and limits of Scripture doe permit, which holds forth an exact and perfect rule, for all precisely, to observe, without the least variation. As knowing that severe law of God, often used in Scripture, and wherewith, as with a bounder-stone, the whole Book of God is closed up, and that with a solemn protestation of Christ him selfe: *If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; And if any man shall diminish ought thereof, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy Citty.*

Revel. 22. 18.
19.
So Deut. 4. 2.
and 10. 32.
Prov. 30. 6.

But some will haply object; This is meant, not in point of Church-government, Discipline, Rites, Ceremonies, as left to mans liberty to ordaine, add, supply, institute, according to the diversity of the lawes and customes of every Nation; but in matter of Doctrine, Story, and Prophecy. To which I answer (though sufficiently noted before, and now in one word) if God were so exact about the forme of the Tabernacle, (a type of Christs Church under the Gospell) to have all things observed according to the Pattern, even unto the least pin; what reason can any reasonable man give, why Christ, the same Law-giver, and pattern it selfe should be lesse carefull over his Church in the New Testament, so as to leave it at six and seven, to the liberty of all Kingdomes and Nations of the world, to set up in the Church what Government, Discipline, Rites, Ceremonies, Canons, they pleased, upon what pretence soever, as for the Churches peace and welfare? Hath not the opening of this one sence, let in such an Inundation of all manner of humane Inventions in this kind, as hath wel-nigh drowned the whole world in all manner of superstition and error? Therefore, my deare brother *Primo*, assure your selfe, not all the wits, not all the learning in the World, will be able to asert this your assertion, but that it must of necessity fall to ground with its owne weight; and there brother, let it lie, or rather die, and bury it there, whence it came. All that Christ appointed is exactly to be followed, though Christ was not so exact in circumstances under the Gospell; because 1. That was a typicall and figurative worship. 2. Christ now looks more to substan-

substantiall; *Iob. 4. 24.* wherein he is more strict, *1 Cor. 13.*

And where you say, that as in the *Apostles times*, *Christians* multiplied; so also their *Churches*, *Church-Officers*, and their *Church-Government*, *Discipline* varied: Consider that here was no variation of the *Rule*; but by degrees the rule of Church-government and Discipline was perfected, not varied. The Temple was seven yeares in building; first hewing, squaring, then erecting stone after stone, timber after timber, each in his proper place; *1 Chron. 21* here was no variation of the frame and forme of the Temple all this while; but the worke went up day by day, till it came to perfection; according to the patterne in writing given to *David* by the Spirit. Even so, while the spiritual Temple is framing, the daily goinge up of it by order after order, and rule after rule, is no variation, but a graduall tending to perfection, till all be finished; as we now see the whole frame of Church-government for all true Evangelicall Churches is completed in the New Testament, as nothing under the paines aforesaid, may either be diminished; or added to it. And the same Orders are prescribed to all the Churches; *So ordaine I in all Churches*, saith the Apostle, *1 Cor. 7. 17.* So for the collection for the *Saintes*, and for the first day of the weeke for publick meetings (as before) the same order he gives to the Church of *Corinth*, which he doth for the Churches of *Galatia*, *1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.* So Officers chosen and ordayned in every Church; *Act. 14. 23. Tit. 1. 5, 7.* So as if one Church for the smallnesse of it have fewer Officers, and another Church for the largenesse of it more in number, as the Church in *Jerusalem* had need of seven *Deacons*; both for the magnitude of the Congregation, and the multitude of the poore therein; *Act. 6.* yet this makes no variation in the forme of Church-government, as differing one from another, either for substance, or circumstance, saving onely *several manner* as a little man is a man, as well as the called man.

In a word, those Arguments, which you by way of description set downe in your owne forme of words, with their *Excess*, for as much as they are of your own devising, I therefore leave them with you to consider better of them. Onely one I cannot passe by, without wrong to *Christ*, to his word, to his Spirit, to his Apostles.

Every

Every man (say you) in his Infancy, is borne defective of Religion, of the use of speech, reason, understanding, faith, &c.

Erro. He ought to continue so, when he is grown a man.

Yet this is the main Argument of some Independents, say you: O brother! Of what Independents? As whence this Argument? Because they hold that in nothing they ought to swerve from the exact Rule, Gods Word, for the government of Churches? And doe you compare the Scripture (as it was in the Apostles time) to a child in his Innocency, defective &c. So as,

if we will not transgresse the bounds of Scripture for Church government, we doe as much in effect, as argue, Every man in his Infancy is borne defective of Religion, &c.

Erro. he ought to continue so, when he is grown a man? We dare goe no further, then the Scripture leadeth; therefore we are a company of Infants.

Good brother, call in these extravagances. We say the Churches were as perfect then as ever since, they had all Ordinances, the most eminent Officers, the most large gifts, &c.

and as many in a place called to the Faith, as can be shewn in any one place since, to have come in voluntarily to the Gospel.

And so, they are not allowed to be so perfect then as ever since, they had all Ordinances, the most eminent Officers, the most large gifts, &c.

and as many in a place called to the Faith, as can be shewn in any one place since, to have come in voluntarily to the Gospel.

And so, they are not allowed to be so perfect then as ever since, they had all Ordinances, the most eminent Officers, the most large gifts, &c.

and as many in a place called to the Faith, as can be shewn in any one place since, to have come in voluntarily to the Gospel.

And so, they are not allowed to be so perfect then as ever since, they had all Ordinances, the most eminent Officers, the most large gifts, &c.

and as many in a place called to the Faith, as can be shewn in any one place since, to have come in voluntarily to the Gospel.

And so, they are not allowed to be so perfect then as ever since, they had all Ordinances, the most eminent Officers, the most large gifts, &c.

and as many in a place called to the Faith, as can be shewn in any one place since, to have come in voluntarily to the Gospel.

And so, they are not allowed to be so perfect then as ever since, they had all Ordinances, the most eminent Officers, the most large gifts, &c.

and as many in a place called to the Faith, as can be shewn in any one place since, to have come in voluntarily to the Gospel.

Proposition.

Such arguments produce any one solid reason, why they ought not to be in a high degree of Obstinacy, Singularity, &c.

Government, in case it shall be established among us, by the generall conference of the Synod, and Parliament, at most conference to Gods Word, the Lawes & Government of our Realm;

ought to be reputed to be in a high degree of Obstinacy, Singularity, &c.

Assumption. But Independents cannot produce any one solid reason, why they ought not to do so, as aforesaid.

Conclusion. Therefore Independents ought to be reputed to be in a high degree of Obstinacy, Singularity, &c.

Now truly brother, a heave charge you lay upon these poore creatures you doe so becall *Independents*. As 1. of *Obstinacy*.

If that be *obstinacy*, against mens consciences not to yeeld blind obedience to mens commands in point of Religion. 2. Of *singularity*. If that be *singularity*, for a few to enter in at the strait gate, and to walk in at the narrow way. If that be *singularity*, to doe that which the multitude will not doe: to come under the government of Christs Kingdome, in the government of our consciences, and of his Churches, which is a Principle, you your selfe in termes cannot, dare not deny. 3. Of *Arrogancy*: If that be *Arrogancy*, for one Church not to exalt it selfe over another, or for Pastors not to Lord it over their flocks. 4. Of *self-ends*: If that be *self-seeking*, which (if any other) is a false-denying, and a taking up of our crosse daily, as Malefactors ready to be crucified, as without which resolution we cannot follow Christ. If that be *self-seeking*, to rip our selves of the preferments and favours of the world, to be exposed naked to the reproach of all, to be accounted the out-casts of the world, and the off-scouring of all things, as at this day. And lastly, Of *peremptory schisme*: If that be *schisme*, whereby we ought to separate our selves from all doctrines contrary to what is delivered, *Rom. 16. 17.* and so farre as is possible, from all the rudiments of the world, from the Ordinances of men, which are not after Christ, that so wee might adhere to him, and *walk in him, being taught by him*, as *Ephc. 1. 21.* *Col. 2. 6.* the truth is in *Iesus*.

But now, that these *Independents* should undergoe all these, *hard speeches*, and yet not to be able to shew one solid reason for it, surely then, a fools cap and a bell were fittest for them. But I hope, brother, if you have but read hitherto, and well weighed in a just ballance, the many reasons we have already given you, perhaps in some of them at least, if not in all, you will find something that may challenge the title of solid, in your clearer and more solid judgement.

Now to your Argument. First of all I might deny the necessity of the consequence of your Proposition. For it is not necessary that every truth should cease to be truth, because every one cannot shew a solid reason for it. The fire hath an essentiall form, and yet no man can find it out, It burneth, yet none can shew a solid reason why. The Martyrs some of them professed they could not dispute for that truth they held: but say they we can die for it. And what

Formerly used
necessary.
Scaliger.
Exercis.

Rom. 3:3,

what if that Church Government, which your *filly Independents* hold, be a truth, and yet some of them not able to shew one solid reason for it? Must it therefore not bee a truth? As the Apostle saith, *What if some did not beleave? Shall their unbeliefe make the faith of God without effect.*

But I flatly deny your Assumption, and affirme, that your *Independents* both have and doe, and can produce many solid Reasons, why they may nor ought nor in point of Conscience, willingly submit to such a Presbyterian Government, as you prescribe, because framed by the generall consent of a Synod and Parliament, conceived by them as consonant to Gods Word, the Lawes and Government of our Realme. One Reason is, *Consonant to Gods Word, and conforms to the Lawes of this, or any other Realme.* cannot stand together: as before is shewed. And the reason hereof is, because Christs Kingdome is so transcendent, so absolute distinct *Independent*, (if you will) as it is not obliged to conform and scope to humane Lawes and peoples manners, as you put a necessity upon it. A second Reason, because you require obedience to that, which men shall conceive *consonant to Gods Word &c.* Toucht also before, and now againe to put you in mind. And therefore upon this ground we ought not in point of conscience to subject and captivate our faith to mens opinions. A third Reason, why we may not doe it, is, because you require absolute obedience to the generall consent of Assembly, and Parliament. Now we dare not pin our faith upon generality of mens opinions. The generality of the votes of the *Jewes State* carried it away, to crucifie their King. If the whole world might vote this day, the generality would be against Christ, as hee is indeed the onely anoynted King, Priest, and Prophet. What if the generality vote amisse, while yet they may conceive all to bee right, because *consonant* to what they most affect? No, though orthodox and godly, as was shewed before in the instance of *Papianus* in the Concell of Nice. A fourth Reason, Because we acknowledge Christ alone to be Lord of our Conscience, and no power of men on earth herein to be joyned with him. *Harm. Confess. sect. 11. The Magistrate rules the body, not the minde.* And therefore we dare not subvert our conscience to humane lawes, customes, and manners, as to Gods Word, with which you

you doe so equally yoke them. So as wee answer you with the Apostles, whenall the Synedrion of the Jewish State with one generall voice interdictioned them from preaching in Christs

Name: *Whether is he agnall in the sight of God, to obey you rather*

then God Iudge 10. A fifth Reason: because the Holy Ghost by the

Apostle expressly condemns all humane Ordinances in matters

of faith and Religion, whereof Church government is a branch,

and a doctrinall part, so as mans law therein may not binde the

Acts 4. 19.

Et dicitur

4. 17, &c.

A sixth Reason: Because it is Antichristian to deny Iesus to bee

the Christ, that is, the onely King, Priest, and Prophet of his

Church. Hee is an *Antichrist*, that denieth any of these three

1 Iohn 2. 13.

Offices. But to deny Christ to be the onely King of his Church,

is to deny him in one of his Incommunicable offices. And they

thus deny Iesus to bee the Christ, that place man with Christ in

his throne, that set humane *Laws and Customs* of all Nations

cheeke by iowle with the *Word of God*. Here Iesus is denied to

be the Christ. I could here adde many more reasons to these:

but these may suffice. that you may see there bee some Reasons

which your *Independents* can produce, and those so solid, as the

Gates of Hell shall not prevaile against.

But, say you, if we thus claime exemption from such binding

Decrees of men in the matters of Christ, and that in point of con-

science, then may also Papists, Anabaptists, and all other sects claime

the like exemptions, upon the like grounds. Brother, for that, I hope

you will put a difference betweene orthodox Churches, and he-

terodox. But I say againe, for any mans conscience, bee it never

so erroneous, as that of Papists, yet certainly the conscience of

such simply considered in it selfe, nor you, nor any man in the

world hath any thing to doe, further then to instruct and admo-

nish, and labour to informe and rectifie: enforce it you may nor.

But shall we tolerate Popery, and so Idolatry in our Land?

Obj.

I answer; It is one thing to tolerate Popery and Idolatry pub-

Ans.

lickly in a land, and another to tolerate a man in his conscience.

Magistrates may not tolerate open Popery and Idolatry to be set

up in the land; but the conscience of a Papist, they are no ma-

sters, or Judges of. If the Civill Magistrate see any of Gods

Commandements actually violated, hee beareth not the sword

Rom. 13.

for naught; evil actions he must punish: but he hath no power over the consciences of any; to punish a man for that, so long as he makes no open breach of Gods Commandements, or the just lawes of the Land. And so in the rest. And, brother, in your twelfth Question, and confesse so much, reproving (but how justly) your Independents for censuring the *outward hearts* and *spirituall estates* of others; and alledging that Scripture, that forbids men to judge, because God only knowes mens hearts. Now, brother, that which you deny to others, is to be judges of mens hearts, and spirituall estates, why will you either assume it to your selfe, or attribute it to others, by placing them in Christs throne, and thereby displacing Christ himselfe? As the Apostle saith, *Who art thou that judgest anothers servant? To his Master he standeth, or falleth.* Much more, who art thou, that judgest Gods servant: And ver. 10. And why dost thou judge thy brother, Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? we shall all stand at the Judgement seat of Christ. Christ therefore is the sole Judge of every mans conscience, even he alone, that is the Judge of quicke and dead. And brother, let me put it to your Conscience, Doe you thinke it equall, that either your conscience should be a rule of mine, or mine of yours? And if no one mans conscience may be the rule of anothers; certainly neither may all the mens consciences in the world be the Judge of any one mans. 2. How ever we finde neither rule, example, nor reason from Scripture, to force men to Religion originally; yet the Rabins say, if man kept the seven precepts of Noah, hee might not bee forced further.

The eleventh question.

Concerning this question, it containeth in it nothing but grievous invectives against the way you call *Independent*: You call it a *Seminary of schismes, & dangerous divisions in Church, State*; So did Terrullian the Jewes Advocate against Paul, charge him for a *pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jewes throughout the world*: Acts 24. 5. You pretend to ponder it in the balance of Scripture, or right reason; but you neither shew in Scripture nor right reason, to ballance it in. You call it a *Flood-gate to let in an Inundation of heresies, errors, sects, libertinisme, and*

Law-

lawlesse, without means of suppressing them, when introduced. For this you bring Mr. Williams his bloody tenent. Now suppose him, or his booke, hereticall: will you make the way of Christ so too? There was ene *Judas* a traitor, shall therefore all the rest of the Apostles, or their Apostolicall calling be so too? You alledge also *Anabaptist*all, *Animian*, *heretic*all, *Atheist*icall opinions, as of the Souls mortality, Divorce at pleasure: will you therefore father all these upon Christs Kingly government? In *Luthers* time sundry heresies sprung up; was *Luther* therefore either the cause or occasion of them? Doe we not know, that Mothes are bred in the purest cloth? And the dunghills send forth strongest favours when the Sunne shines hottest. Is either the cloth the proper cause of the moth, or the Sunne of the stinking vapour? Never greater errors have been, then since the Gospel hath clearly shined forth. True it is indeed that these divisions, and diversities of opinions, are with bleeding hearts to be bewailed: But shall the Gospel of the Kingdome beare the burthen of all? This were, as with the Christians in Rome in *Neros* time; when any judgement of God fell upon the City, he would still impute it to the Christians, and punish them for it. But we are taught better. When the good Husband-man sowed pure wheat in the field, the enemy came and superfeminated tares; shall we therefore blame the wheat, because the tares come up with them.

But that you impute to this way libertinisme and lawlesse: Good brother consider, are we *Libertines*? or are wee *lawlesse*? Nay, may wee not herein plead for our selves, that in all things we endeavour to conforme our selves wholly to the law of Christ: and if in any thing we offend justly any just law of the land, we refuse not to suffer. Onely, brother, let not that Imperiaall Edict be revived, that if any confessed themselves to be Christians, they should be put to death; so such as you call *Independents*, should for this very name suffer. As *Tertullian* said, *Nomen pro crimine*, when the very name of Christian was taken for a crime. And for meanes of suppressing errors, what meanes could suppress those many errors that sprung up to the successive ages of the Church? Was not the Word of God the onely meanes, and not humane power? yea, humane power is as well a meanes to maintaine he-

refies as to suppress them. You know what *Constantine* and his souldo did to maintain the *Arian* heresie. And orthodox Independent Churches are as good means as any other, together with the care and countenance of the Magistrate, if it may be had, to defend them, and enable them to send forth labourers, without which the Presbitery will bee as barren, breast and womb, as any other.

The twelfth Question.

The sundry passages of this question, as I find them scattered along, I shall glean them, and so bundle them up for a conclusion at this time. For this question seems to be a *Lemma* of Queries.

And first, you quarrell the Title of *Independencie*. Truly, brother, none of all those whom you thus intitle, doe at all glory in this name, so as to give you thanks for your so often stiling them thus in one poore sheet of paper, seeing they cannot imagine you doe it *honoris gratia*, while every where you set it as a brand. Notwithstanding wee are not so ashamed of it, as utterly to disclaime it; and that for two reasons, First, for distinction sake, betweene us, and that which you call your Presbyteriall government. The second is, because this word *Independent* is to signifie, that we hold all particular Churches of Christ, to bee of equall authority, and none to have or exercise jurisdiction over another, but that each Church is under Christs government, as the sole head, King, Lord, Law-giver thereof. But we would not that you should give us this as a nick-name, or a name of reproach, or badge of scorne: nor that you should call us so, as if we denied subjection to civill authority in matters of civill government, nor yet that you should meane such an *Independencie*, as if we held not good correspondence with all sister-Churches, by way of consociation, consultation, communion, communication, mutuall consolation, supportation, and (in a word) in all things, duties, offices, as wherein Christs Kingdom is held up, the graces of the Churches exercised, & the liberties of each Church preserved intire, which is the glory of Christ, which wee have touched before. And therefore, brother, you mightily mistake the matter when you interpret *Independencie*, as not needing both the *Communion* and *assistance* of other persons, Nations, Churches. Then secondly you question, *Whether the Nationall Covenant*

doth

both in sundry respects strongly engage the Nation against Independencie? Truly, brother, not at all, so long as all our Reformation is to be reduced to, and regulated by the word of God. And that is a sure foundation, whereon our *Independencie* dependeth. In which respect the Nation is by the Covenant engaged for *Independencie*.

Thirdly, you quere, whether if *Independencie* (rightly taken still as before) if *strips* of all disguising pretences, be not *Pharisaicall*, *vain-glourious*, *selfe-conceitednesse*, &c. Here, brother, you lash us with a whip of many cords, but that our armour is proof. So you have done more then *tenne times*, yea all along. And that all this should come from a friend, a brother, a sufferer, from a companion, and counsellor, how hard it is to be borne? And you tell us of *disguising pretences*, if *strips*; and for this, you have provided an *unmasking* for us. O brother, wee have no such *disguisings*, as to feare your *unmaskings*. We may in this boldly answer with the Apostle. *1 Thess. 2, 3 & 4. 5.* And for *Pharisaicall*. *Spirituall pride*, *vain-glory*, *singularitie*, *selfe-conceitednesse* of *superlative holinesse*, which as dirt you throw so liberally in our face; To this brother, I will say no more but this: *Si se est accusasse, quis innocens erit?* If a bare and malicious accusation be enough to fasten a crime, who shall be innocent? And did you ever enter into our hearts, to see what secret *spirituall* rumours, and *apostumations* be there? and if not, how come you presently, in the very same sentence, and with the same breath to blow all this besmearing dust into your owne face? For you charge us with *passing uncharitable censures upon mens hearts and spirituall estates*; of which (say you) God never made us *Judges*; and forbids us for so *Judge* because he only knowes mens hearts (as was noted before) Now then, brother, why doe you thus judge the hearts and spirituall estates of your brethren? Consider it well in cold blood. And, brother, what doe you see in the *Independencie*, that you should thus judge them? *The tree is knowne by the Fruits.* Are they ambitions of preferments, of glory of the world, of favour of great ones, of praise of men that doe voluntary forsake all, and strip themselves of all to follow naked Christ? Pharisees indeed loved the praise of men more then the praise of God. That is *Pharisaicall*, so in the rest. Therefore

*Nudum Christi
sum, nudus se-
quere, Hieron.*

brother

brother, tell not the world what malice may suggest unto you to think of us, but what you see or observe in us. And yet, brother, the rule of charity is, that you should first tell your brother privately of his fault, before you blaze it to the world. But thus at least we come to know our fault. And what is it? Wee doe (say you) *deem our selves too transcendently holy, sanctified, and religious above others, that we esteeme them altogether unworthy of, & wholly exclude them from our Communion & Church-society, as Pagan, Heathens, or profane persons (though perhaps as good, or better then our selves) unless they will submit to their Church-covenant, & government, refusing all true brotherly familiarity society with them.* So you. Now, brother *Pryn*, I confesse I am one of those, whom you call *Independents*; and did you ever observe any such supercilious strangeness of carriage in me towards you, and other of your and my friends, no lesse zealous against Independents, then you selfe, as you charge us withall? Have there not been many interchangeable invitations betweene you and me, with loving acceptations, whereby we have enjoyed mutuall society, in all friendly and brotherly entertainment, saving still some quarrels about this way, but ever parting friends? And more frequent it had been, had your occasions, and sometimes mine owne, permitted. And neither at this day, since these your invectives came forth, (though they were no small griefe to me, and that even for your sake) am I become a greater stranger to you, either in face or affection, then I was before. For I am so perswaded of your good nature, that did you truly apprehend, and dive into the mystery of Christs Kingly government in his Churches and Children, certainly you would never have thus sharpened and imbittered your stile against your brethren; the Lord open your eyes to see it. But however, brother, either be more moderate in censuring, or else censure no: at all, without just cause.

But we *exclude*, (say you) *as good or better then our selves from communion and Church society with us.* Surely it may bee so, but brother, we *exclude* them not, but they *exclude* themselves. And you give the reason, because they will not submit to the Churches government. But it doth not hence follow, that wee therefore deem either our selves so transcendently holy (as you say) or others altogether

altogether *unworthy*. But, brother, we esteem the government of Christs Church so holy, as we cannot think them fit to be admitted (be they never so good) that think to slightly of the way, and of them that walk in it, that they refuse to agree to walk in this way with the people of God. Would you admit of a member into your family who is disaffected with your courses, and orders of the family? What cause then hath he to complain, if upon knowledge thereof you refuse to entertain him? If therefore every family should be carefull to provide for its owne peace, by having all in it of like affection and judgement (if possible) why not Christs owne house and family? And, brother, the truth is, (for we love no *disguising*, as to need any *unmasking*) wee love not in a time of reformation, after a generall tincture of superstition and will-worship, blindly to goe to worke, to admit of all commers, and to cast Christs *Pearles* and *holy things* to such as we know not. Or if we be perswaded, they be truly godly, and yet they are not perswaded of the warrantablenesse of this way, how can they with a good conscience desire communion with us? And if not, how can the Church receive them? Nor indeed doe any such offer themselves; nor doth the Church impose any such conditions as a godly Christian hath cause not to accept.

Wee desire to do those things that please God, namely, such as he commends and commands. *Rev. 2. 2.* Christ commends the *Angel of the Church of Ephesus*, for not bearing with those that are wicked, and for trying those that said they were *Apostles*, and were not, but were found liars. So some may come that profess themselves to be Christians, that is, to be godly, to be beleevers, but we dare not receive them without triall: if they refuse to be tried, we may the more suspect them. And what interest hath any to Church-communion, that is not a member, or to the Seale, that is not in covenant? And we love not to doe that, for which to repent afterwards. Wee desire all our members may be such as they may peaceably and sweetly continge with us. Wee are loath to have the world offended by the unworthy walking of any one member. And we desire by our best providence to prevent, that none once admitted, should ever bee cast out againe. And brother, all this we hold to be our duty, for the preferring of the honour of Christ, and of his Ordinances, and of his

Churches in the beauties of holiness. Others may take a broader way, if they please, wee dare not. The Church and body of Christ is not of so slight account with us, as that we should carelessly and promiscuously admit of every one that offer themselves, without some triall of them, both for the Churches satisfaction, and for the account she must make to Jesus Christ. How strict the Jewes were, *Ainsworth* in *Gen.* 12. v. 17. relates, out of the Rabbines. And even *Bellarmin* himselfe had such a cleare apprehension of the generall nature of Christs Church, (though himselfe did not experimentally and particularly know it) that hee useth these words: *Ecclesia precipue, &c.* The Church especially and intentionally gathereth onely beleevors, such as have true faith in their heart. And when any hypocrites are mingled among such as truly beleve not, it falleth out besides the intension of the Church. For if it could know them, it would never admit them; or being casually admitted, it would forthwith exclude them. Thus *Bellarmin*; which he sets down as a most true speculative Principle (though but ill applied and worse practised by him and his, and such like,) which yett all true Churches should be carefull to observe and put in practice. And truly, brother, we desire to do this, that if it be possible, no misbeleever, no prophane liver, no hypocrite be admitted a member of Christs body (though an hypocrite having his vizard on, may sometimes *creep in unawares into the Church:) And therefore diligent circumspection is used for prevention. And *turpius ejicitur quam non admittitur hospes*: A guest is more fairly kept out, then cast out. This, brother, is our course, that we hold in admitting of members; wee think we cannot be too wary, though too strict we are not. We suspect the gold that will not abide the touch. A Christian name may silver over the copper, such as the Scripture calls *Reprobare silver*, *Ier.* 6. 30. Though we know each currant coyn hath its allowance of alloy; and each beleeving Saint so many graines allowance; but all sincere, nothing counterfeit. And as for Church-covenant, we have sufficiently spoken before.

The last charge you lay upon Independencie, is, *uncharitableness, carelesnes, and neglect of one anothers welfare, and the like.* Brother, for uncharitableness, let our practices, the best proofs of true charity, pl. ad forus. We have manifested our love and

loyalty

Ecclesia precipue & ex intentione fidelium tantum colligit, qui veram fidem in corde habent. Cum autem admittitur aliqui fidei, qui verè non credunt, id accidit præter intentionem Ecclesia: scilicet nimis eos non possit, nequam admittit, aut casu admittit, contingit excludere. *Bellarmino Eccles. l. 3. c. 26.* See also *D. Field of the Church, Book 1. cap 7.* * Such were called of old, *μεισάνκτι, Εὐσεβ.*

loyalty to the State, whereof we are naturall and political members. For the safetie therof we have powred out our estates to the very bottome. We dare herein compare with all others of our rank and meanes. My selfe a poore man, am out for the State between foure and five hundred pounds: and I blesse God, I have done it with a cheerfull heart, not for squint respects to lay out so much at once, to receive of the State so much annuity. Yet I speake it not to glory, but you have compelled me. And besides their meanes, none have more prodigally adventured and spent their lives for the State, then your Independents have; and for none hath the God of bartels appeared more: And but for stirring up envie (which needs not) I should put you in mind of *Marston-moore*. In a word, brother, we dare challenge all the world in point of fidelity to the State, and our native Country. Where be they that more love, honour our Senat, Synod, Synedrion? Who pray more frequently, more fervently for them? So that herein you cannot say we are Independents, as for want of true love, and that of the best kind, to the publick Cause and State, from which our Independencie is so farre from separating our hearts and affections, with all our abilities to serve it, as that it hath cleared it self to be as fast & firmly united unto it, as any other whatsoever. And for true charitableness, brother, where is it to be found, if not in those Churches y^e call *Independents*? But you will say, this love is among our selves. And God grant it may ever be so: Yet it ends not there, but extends to all. And brother, for a close, I challenge you to shew me any one Parochiall congregation in *England*, wherein there is or can be the like love one to another, the like care one for another, the like spirituall watchfulness one over another, the like union and communion of members in one mysticall body, in a sympathy of affections, in such a fraternitie as is described, *Psal. 133*: a lively type of a true Church of Christ. Till you shew us the like in any of your Parochiall Assemblies, consisting of your mixed multitude, good brother, restrain your spirit so mightily imbittered against us, lest in charging us with uncharitableness, your selfe alone be found to be uncharitable. And so I have done with your first twelve Questions.

A
VINDICATION
OF CHURCHES
 COMMONLY CALLED
INDEPENDENT.
 OR
AN ANSWER
 TO M^r PRYNNEs second Book.



Y^e deare brother, to your twelve new Interrogatories I present you with a new Answer. I call it new, because I shall cull out such passages as I finde new, or not so much insisted on in your former twelve. Which as they are fewer, so I shall be the shorter, for as much as in the former, I have been the larger. But brother, I find not this in your book, which you pretend in your Title, to wit, the *Unmasking of Independency*. Nor can we expect it of you: for in your Proeme you say, that the Independents have not dogmatically, and in direct termes, discovered the full truth of what they assert. If not, what kinde of visage will you discover, when you have taken off the mask? Surely by your handling of the matter, you mean to unmask some Hags face, such as pleased the Painter. Which when you have done, it will appeare to all the wise-hearted, that it is not the face of *Independency*, as where in there shines forth such a beauty, as it seemeth, you yet never saw.

In your Preface to the *Courteous Reader*, you say, *We politickly conceal the principall grounds, and more deformed parts of our Church Platforme, for feare of miscarrying*. Good brother, who told you so? Remember your owne Lesson before, *Judge not*. But indeed, had you reprov'd us (yet in love and meeknesse) for not setting forth more fully a compleat Modell of this Fa-

brick,

brick, or spirituall house, it had been something. Which yet if it were done, you would not impute it to policy, that it was not sooner done. But when it is exactly done, you will finde no deformed parts at all in it: but contrariwise a greater beautie then in that famous Temple that *Solomon* built, as being the spirituall Temple of *Jesus Christ*: so as I am forie you are put to the paines of pumping out our determinations (as you say) by your Questions: when as you should rather finde it as a Fountaine flowing forth in the streets. But brother, how doe you write by Question, not decision (as you say) when your Questions prove to be Decisions, as your former twelve are? And what doe you else but refuse upon bare conjectures, *Ad abatem more pugnando*, as those at blind-man-buff. For your Charges upon us are very sore, and (as many doe say) bitter, so farre beyond reason, as you are not able truly to say, Wherefore.

Ephes. 2. 21.

Prov. 5. 16.

For your first Question, *Whether the Independent form of Church government be any where to be found in the Old or New Testament*: this we have resolved in your former twelve Questions: so as this is no new Interrogatorie, unlesse you put the greater difference between Questions and Interrogatories. And though it were in no antiquitie (which yet we have shewen before) never thelesse, if it be found in the Scripture (as there it is) whatsoever clouds of the mystery of iniquitie have darkened the lustre of it for so many hundred yeares: yet this cannot plead prescription against it. For if *Nullo tempore accrevit Regis* then surely no tract of time can prescribe against the Law of Christs Kingdome, which we find upon sacred record. But where, say you? Why, brother, this House of God wherein Christ rules as King, stands upon so many Principles, as so many main pillars; not to be shaken. As

1. It is a spirituall house, whose onely builder and governour is Christ, and not man.
2. It is a spirituall Kingdome, whose onely King is Christ, and not man.
3. It is a spirituall Republick, whose onely Lawgiver is Christ, and not man.
4. It is a spirituall Corporation, or Body, whose onely head is Christ, and not man.

5. It

5. It is a communion of Saints, governed by Christs Spirit, not mans.

6. Christs Church is a congregation called and gathered out of the world by Christs Spirit and Word, and not by man.

These Principles are such, as the adversaries themselves of this kingdome of Christ, cannot dare not deny. And out of these Principles do issue these Conclusions.

1. That no man is the builder of this spirituall house.

2. That no man, nor power on earth hath a Kingly power over this Kingdome.

3. That no earthly Law-givers may give Lawes for the government of this Republick.

4. That no man may claim or exercise a headship over this body.

5. That no man can, or ought to undertake the government of this communion of Saints. *Item*, That none are of this communion but visible Saints. *Ergo*, a true visible Church of Christ cannot be defined, or confined to a Parochiall multitude. *Item*, That the Government of this communion, is not extrinsecall, but intrinsecall, by the Spirit of the Word, and by the Word of the Spirit.

6. That men may not appoint, limit, constitute what Congregations of all sorts they please, to be Churches of Christ, as Nations and Parishes.

Object.

But you confesse in generall, Christ to be the builder, the King, the Law-giver, the Head, the Governour, the Caller, the Gatherer of his Churches.

Answer.

If you doe, you must approve of those Churches you call *Independent*, as whereof Christ is the onely Builder, King, Law-giver, Head, Governour, Caller, and Gatherer. If you doe not, in denying Christ in these relations, you deny Christ in his absolute Regalitie.

But in your answer to your Antiquerist, page 6. you doe in part grant Christ to be King internally in the soule, which you say, *may passe for tolerable*. O brother! no more but *may passe for tolerable*? You that are so large-hearted to your friends, are you so strait-laced to Christ? Surely, brother, Christ is the full and sole King, reigning in the heart and conscience of every true believer.

leever. It were intolerable not to grant this in its full latitude. But you absolutely deny Christs sole Kingly Government externall over his Churches. Brother, this is no lesse Christs Kingly prerogative, then the former. Hee that is King over every part of the body, must needs be King over the whole body. If therefore Christ be the onely King over every mans conscience, so as no man, nor power on earth, may sit with him in this his Throne: Then consequently by the self-same reason, must he by the Word of the Kingdome, as the only law thereof, exercise his Kingly office over his Churches: so as no humane power or law may intermeddle to prescribe rules for the government, or forms of this spirituall House and Kingdome. For otherwise, if man should set up a form of government over the Church of Christ, to which all must conforme: Then of necessitie should man bee Lord over the conscience, which is the highest presumption against the most High. And then what mischiefs would follow? What intolerable tyranny over the conscience? Then must your words (*ibid.*) come to passe: *If a moderated or regulated Episcopacie, the same with Presbytery, should by the Synods advice, be unanimously established in Parliament, as most consonant to the Scriptures, and most agreeable to the civill government, I shall readily submit unto it without opposition, and why not you, and all others?* So you. O brother, I stand amazed! but I goe on.

Then againe, the Scripture, as it sets downe the qualifications of the members of this body, so the forming of them in the body in the parts thereof, more principall, and lesse, superiour and inferiour, for order and well-being: As *Pastors and Teachers, Teaching and Ruling Elders, Helps, Governments, Bishops and Deacons*, or by what other meanes soever they are diversified in Scripture. And this is one uniforme forme of Government, which Christ hath fixed in his Churches, without any difference at all, but *secundum magis & minus* (as before) as lesser Churches have fewer officers, greater more. So as, brother, if the old *Wine be better*, old *Presbytery*, old *unlordly Episcopacie*, surely the *Independents* doe justly challenge it: Which had you once truly tasted of, you would never have desired to drinke other. The Lord remove that aguish humor. * *Vexatus fabre retusus optima.*

1 Tim. 5. 17.

Ph 1. 1. 1.

1 Cor. 12. 28.

Acts 6. & 10.

* *Paltingen.*

Your second Interrogatory is about the lawfull power of
Civill

Civil Magistrates in all matters of Church-government, where-
 in you tax ~~some~~ *Independents* for extraordinary eclipsing the same.
 Some: what some may say, is one thing, must therefore the *Independ-*
ent Church-government say it too? You alledge for this a pas-
 sage in the answer of two of the brethren to A. S. for wch one of
 them is lately questioned: but I hope he wil clear himself. But the
 weight of this whole Interrogatory lies in your marginall note:
 where you peremptorily conclude; *That the chief government and*
ordering of the Church, and power of making Ecclesiasticall Lawes, or
Canons to bind it, before the Law belonged to the Patriarchs and others,
was not as they were Priests, but Rulers, and Fathers of their Fami-
lies: under the Law (say you) is belonged to Moses, to the Kings of
Judah, Israel, and the morall assemblies or congregations of the Prin-
ces, Nobles, chief Captains, Heads and Elders of the people: There-
fore under the Gospel, by like reason and equity, and because it is a part
of Christs Kingly, not Priestly, or Propetrical Office, it must needs be-
long to Christian Princes, Magistrates, Parliaments, to whom Christ
hath delegated his Kingly office; not to Ministers, to whom he hath gi-
ven only his Propetrical or Priestly Authority, not the Royall, as the
Scriptures at large relate: nor yet to particular congregations, who are
not Magistrates nor higher powers, invested with Christs royall Au-
thority.

So you, where you tell us many strange things, but prove no-
 thing. But brother, in such a weightie Argument as this, your
 words ~~will~~ will not serve the turn: yea, you here overthrow those
 Principles forementioned, That Christ is the onely King, so the
 onely Priest, the onely Prophet of his Church, which his three
 offices, are incommunicable to any creature, as they are proper
 and peculiar onely to him: He is the onely King, &c. Now to
 be ~~solus, unus, &c.~~ *solus, unus, &c.* The onely Potentate, the King of Kings, and
 Lord of Lords; this is Christs Regall prerogative, which is in-
 communicable to any, or to all the powers on earth. It is no
 lesse incommunicable then his omnipotence, his omniscience,
 his omnipresence, and the rest of his incommunicable Attri-
 butes: No lesse then his Mediatorship. Those Patriarchs and
 Princes of Israel before the Law, and under the Law, from A-
 dam to Christ, never had this power or prerogative, to make Ec-
 clesiasticall Lawes, or binding Canons; no nor yet Moses, no
 King,

Kings of Judah, Israel, and Generall Assemblies, Princes, Nobles, chiefe Captaines, and Elders of the people, as you muller them up together in your marginall note. A seeming goodly Army indeed; but so many shadowes of men, for any such power they had, as you would with your penfull of ink paint cut unto us. And first for those before the Law was given in *Sinai*: had they this power you speak of? *Cain* and *Abel* brought their Sacrifices. What? Was it a *will-worship of their own election? If so, God had regarded *Abels* sacrifice no more then *Cains*. How then? Their Sacrifice was of Gods own appointment: *Adam* had it from God, and his childreu from him. For as God revealed to *Adam*, Christ, so those Sacrifices, types of Christ. Whence the learned Interpreter *Calvin* saith, *Tenendum est, &c. We are to hold, that the manner of sacrificing was not unadvisedly devised by them, but delivered to them from God. For seeing the Apostle referres the dignity of Abels sacrifice, as attributed to faith, it followes, he offered it not without Gods commandement. So as it could not have pleased God, had it not been according to his commandement.* So *Calvin*. Nor is all here expressed: no doubt they had an Altar also, whereon to offer for the sanctifying and accepting the offering; which Altar was a type of Christ the true *Altar, to whom *Abels* faith had respect. Though we read not of Altar before *Gen. 8:28*. We read also of difference of beasts clean, & unclean, *Gen. 7*. By all which it is evident, that God gave a law to *Adam* and his offspring, suitable to that in Mount *Sinai*, for a rule of divine worship; so also for Church-government. And this further appeareth by the Law in *Sinai* afterwards, where *Moses* is expressly charged to do all things (both for worship and Church-government) according to the pattern shewed him in the Mount; as before we noted. And when the Temple was to be built, God gave to *David* an exact pattern of all things, yea, of every particular, both in writing and by his Spirit, not onely for worship, but for the whole ministration about the Temple, a type of Christs Church under the Gospell, so as neither *Moses* nor *Kings of Judah*, had the least power to devise any other forme, then that prescribed of God. The keeping of the Passover once in the second month by *Ezechiah*, was extraordinary, upon a case of necessity. And for the *Kings of Israel*, will you equall them with the *Kings of Judah*?

Gen 4.4.

Col. 2.23.

Calv. Comment. in Gen. cap 4. Tenendum est, non fuisse temere ex cogitatum ab illis sacrificandi morem, sed traditum divinitus, &c. *Heb. 13. 10. 15;

1 Chron. 28. 11, 12, &c. to v. 19;

Had they lawfull power, as *Ierobam*, to set up his two golden *Calves*, and so to change the form of worship & Church-government? When *that King Abas* set up his *Damascen Altar*, was it by a Regall power invested in him from God? So of other Kings of *Juda*, good or bad, they had no lawfull power at all to alter the form prescribed of God, one jot. And therefore, brother, you are wondred at, that being a man of much reading, and mightie parts, you should utter such strange things (*ne quid dicam durum*) as these are, and that so confidently, when you neither doe, nor ever can bring the least prooffe, yea or colour of what you affirm. And therefore your inference upon such empty premises, that therefore under the Gospel, by like reason and equity, it must needs belong to Christian Princes, Magistrates, Parliaments, to whom Christ hath delegated his Kingly office, &c. is no consequence. Whence I note two things: 1. *Like reason and equity*. Now in your premises there is neither reason nor equity, because no truth in them. 2. Christ hath not delegated his Kingly office to any Princes, Magistrates, Parliaments, to set up any form of worship or Church-government of their devising, or conceiving, no more then hee did to all, or any of those you reckon up in the Old Testament. I pray God give you a better understanding in this mystery of Christ, and godly sorrow for these things. Take then the counsell of this great King: *Bee wise therefore, and understand; and kisse this King, this Sonne of God, by obeying him in all that he saith, as being not onely the onely King, but the onely Prophet of his Church (as before) whom who so beareth not I N A L L T H I N G S*, shall even be cut off from his people. But how then doe you say, *This is a part of Christ's Kingly office, not Priestly, or Propheticall, to set up a government; and, bee hath not communicated those other offices to Princes and Parliaments: whereas Christ doth in all things regulate his Kingly office by his Prophetical office?* And again, how say you, Christ hath not given his Kingly office to Ministers, but onely his Priestly and Propheticall; and yet you make an Assembly of Ministers as *Rector Chori* to be the leaders and guides to a *Form of Reformation*, and that necessarily? And denying such to bee Kings, or to have a Kingly office, you exclude them out of the Albe of those faithfull ones, whom Christ hath made a ** Royall Priesthood*, even

* Kings

Psal. 2.

Act. 3. 22.

* *Kings and Priests to God his Father.* But so much of this second Interrogatory.

* 1 Pet. 2. 4.
* Revel. 1. 6.

The third Interrogatory.

Touching this; 1. Wee assume not the power to gather Churches, but being sent or called to preach the *Word of the Kingdome*, thereby people thus called of God, come to be gathered into Church-fellowship, and so by consent doe chuse their Officers.

* Mat. 13. 19.

2. Such as are thus called, to acknowledge Christ their onely King, were not begotten *to this acknowledgments* by such Ministers as you speak of, who deny, disclaime, and preach against Christs Kingly government over mens consciences and Churches. So as such a conversion as you speak of, comes not home to whole Christ: and such, with their converters, doe deny Christs Kingly government; what kind of converts call you these? Or at least and best they are converted but in part; and that main thing wanting, to wit, Christs Kingly office, they come up to by the preaching thereof.

3. Such Ministers, when they set up Christs government, may (being agreed upon by all sides) have those Parishioners again, that for want of it at the first went from them.

4. Our solempne Vow and Covenant obligeth us not to any thing that is prejudiciall to the authority of Gods word, and the libertie of a good conscience, considering how Churches are gathered out of all the world, not this place, nor that, nor this house nor that, but out of * every nation, such as fear God, and * out of every house the sons of peace, & out of * every Citie or Towne, all that receive the Gospel, are called and gathered to Christ.

* Act. 10. 35.
* Luke 19. 6, 7,
8, 10.

5. Concerning Christian liberty in joyning to severall Churches, as in the same house some to affect one, some another: you know what Christ saith, *Luke 12. 51, 52, 53.* And it is God that perswadeth *Sabbat* to dwell in the Tents of *Shem*. And, brother, all that noyse you make all along, with extreame aggravations, as *Confusion, Distraction, implacable Contentions, Schismes, Tumults, &c.* What are they but the very out-cries which the Prelats ever used for the crying and keeping up of

Gen. 9. 27.

their Hierarchy, built upon the same sandy foundation. This is well noted in the *Harmony of Confessions*, Sect. 11, *Confession of Amberg*. These Senator-like Declamations though they be very plausible, and inconstitute the mindes of many against us, yet they may be confuted by most true and substantiall arguments. As, All the Prophets and Apostles were true lovers of the peace and concord of Nations and people: yet were they constrained by the commandement of God, to warre against the Devils kingdome, to preach heavenly doctrine, to collect a Church unto God, and the like. And, The true doctrine of God; and his true worship, must needs be embraced and received; and all errors, that tend to the dishonor of God, must be abhorred and forsaken, though all the world should break and fall down. And much more there.

6. Though we are fully perswaded by Gods Word and Spirit, that this our way is Christs way; yet wee neither doe, nor dare judge others to be reprobates, that walk not with us in it, but we leave all judgement to God, and heartily pray for them: we our selves have been formerly ignorant of it, therefore wee pitie others.

7. Where you object, that under pretence of Christian liberty, whole Houses, Parishes, Counties, may thus come to be divided into severall formes of Churches, as some for the Presbyteriall, some for the Hierarchicall, and so cause Schismes and ruines; or at least unavoidably subvert all ancient bounds of Parishes, all settled maintenance for the Ministry by tythes, &c. Brother, for Christian libertie, who shall perswade the conscience, or who hath power over it, but he that made it, even God, the onely Judge thereof? And for difference of mens judgements in points of Religion, how can it be avoided? And yet it followes not, that upon such differences should come ruine to a State. What serveth the Magistrate, and the lawes of a civill State for, but to keep the peace? And as for Parishes, will you allow no Churches but Parishes? Or are Parishes originally any other but of humane, politicke, and civill constitution, and for civill ends? Or can you say, that so many as inhabit in every Parish respectively, shall bee a Church? Should such Churches and Parishes then necessarily be Churches of Gods calling and gathering? Are they not congregations of mans collection, constitution and coaction meerly?

What

What Churches then? And as for Tithes: what Tithes, I pray you, had the Apostles? Such as be faithfull and painfull Ministers of Christ, he will certainly provide for them: as when hee sent forth his Disciples without any *purse*, or provision, he asked them, *Lacked you any thing?* They said, *Nothing*. Surely, *the labourer is worthy of his hire*. And as for Ministers maintenance by Tithes, I referre you to the judgment of your learned brother Mr. Selden. And as for your Independent Ministers, they plead no other maintenance then the New Testament holds forth, yet not denying the Magistrate and State a power to appoint maintenance for the preaching of the word, as is done in New England, to those that are not members of Churches. And where you charge them, for *having the faith of Christ in respect of persons*, as if they admitted the rich, rather then the poore: Brother, I hope it is not so with others; I am sure, not so with me. And lastly, for your marginall young *Interrogatories*: As,

1. *Of how many members each Congregation?* I am sure your Congregations admit neither augmentation nor diminution, but according to the capacitie of every Parish.

2. *Within what precincts?* Christs Churches are not limited either to place or number.

3. *What set Stipends allowed?* Sufficient, more or lesse.

4. *When and where Churches should assemble?* For *when?* at times convenient. For *where?* Not necessarily in this or that place.

5. *Who shall prescribe extraordinary times of fasting, or shaukgiving to them upon just occasions?* If the occasion be the Churches peculiar Interest, the Church agrees upon the time. But if it be publick, concerning the Politick body of the State, whereof we are native members, in whose weale or woe we sympathize, either we keep dayes of our own appointment extraordinary, or if the Civill State command and appoint a day, we refuse not to observe it.

6. *Who shall rectifie their Church-Covenants, Discipline, Censures, Government, if erroneous, or unjust?* First, Each Church useth her best meanes to rectifie her of Christ, within her selfe. Secondly, If need require, she useth the help of Sister-Churches. Thirdly, If any other, as the Civill State, be not satisfied, shee *refuseth not to yeeld an account of her actions, being required.

7. *Shew*

7. *Shew us (say you) a sufficient satisfactory Commission from Gods Word for all they doe, or desire, before they gather any Churches.* Brother Prynne, you say you will pump out our thoughts: yea, it seemes, you will exanclate, pumpe out every drop that is in us. But stay, brother, you are not yet a Magistrate. And 2. wee hope you will not take up againe the Oath *ex Officio* to pump out all our secrets. And 3. Though I have for my part dealt very freely with you, as my brother, all along: yet give me leave to keep a Reserve, *Donec ad Triarios redieris res*, untill it come to a dead lift, in case we shall be brought before * Princes and Rulers, to give an account of what we *doe, or desire*. And 4. you put us upon too unreasonable a taske, to satisfie you in all that we *DOE, or DESIRE*. First make your particular exceptions, and demands for this, or that: and then we shall know the better how to shape you an Answer, as you see we have here done. What are all your books of Law-cases, all the Volumes of the Casuists, to the resolution upon general grounds, of incident matters, which could not be ruled till they happened? and yet the Government of States is one, and the doctrine of the Scripture in all generally necessary poynts cleare. And we desire you not too too much to grow upon us, when you see we are so coming, and free.

* Mat. 10. 18.

The fourth Interrogatory.

This is much like the next before. For that was about *Ministers power to gather Churches*: this, concerning *the peoples power in uniting themselves in a Church, choosing their Minister, erecting such a Government, as they conceive most suitable to the Scripture. And so all manner of hereticks may set up Churches, and all manner of heresies, sects, be brought in.*

I answer, as before. A Church is a Citie of God, which by her Charter becomes a Citie, being called of God, and by the same Charter (the Scripture) cholet her own Officers: and sets up no other government, but what her Charter prescribes. If any other doe otherwise, and doe pervert the Scripture, it is not to be imputed to the Church of Christ. Her liberties are no law for others licentiousnesse. It was so in the Apostles times, and the

next

next ages after. The true Churches liberties were no true cause of so many heresies; no more then the Christians of old were the cause of the calamities of the Citie or Empire of Rome, because Nero and other Tyrants fallly charg'd them, and as injuriously dealt with them. Nor may we cast away the priviledges of Christians, because others abuse them. Yea, whether we use our priviledges, or no, errours and heresies will be. The Apostles, and Apostolick Churches, could neither keep, nor cast them out; as is shewed before.

But brother, where you say, that if this liberty of setting up an Independent Church-government be admitted: then by the selfe-same reason, they must have a like libertie to elect, erect what Civil forme of government they please: to set up a new Independent Republick, Kingdome, &c. By the selfe-same reason? Surely by no reason at all. Shew us a reason hereof, and take all. And you know, that Republicks, Kingdomes are Independent, though not of Churches electing, erecting. It is unsatisfiable injury, and extreame irrationality thus to argue; for hath Christ given the same command to his people, as such who are not of this world, nor their Kingdome, as he hath done to them in spirimals, which he commands them to practise whosoever forbids? 2. They set up no forme, but take that which is prescribed, which God hath not done in civill government, but left it free, 1 Pet. 2. Rom. 13.

The fifth Interrogatory.

Herein you make a comparison between Presbyteriall and Independent Churches; Why not that, as well as this? And if this, why doe we not shew solid prooffe of it? I answer: We desire to enjoy ours, without making comparison with yours. For prooffe we have shewed sufficient.

Then to a second *Quere*; the answer is, not the Minister alone, nor the Congregation alone, but both together admit members, and set up Christs Government, not their own. And how even you make us a Conventicle, consisting of inconsiderable ignorant members: I beleve, brother *Pyne*, when you shall have any thing to doe with the most contemptible of such Conventicles, as you esteeme us, you will not altogether find us such,

* Rom. 13. 7.

such, as you are pleased to terme us. And for *Nationall Parliaments, States*, wee honour them with whatsoever honour is due unto them, as Gods * Word commandeth us. And for a *Nationall Councell*, as this is, called to advise, not to be peremptory Judges in the matters of God over our consciences, wee detract not their due honour too, as they are pious, and learned men.

2. Where you would have them have the same power in a Parliament and Synod, that they have in a Church, if they be members; it is answered, that all power is restrained to its own sphere and place; so that we may have a greater power in another kind, and yet not that; as no Parliament-man hath the power of a Master of a family in the Parliament, though he have a greater:

The sixth Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* hath sundry branches: the answer whereunto respectively, will intimate what they be.

1. Wee say, as before, None of our Ministers doe by any *usurped authoritie* gather Churches.

2. We cannot conceive, that any law of the Land is against the setting up of *Christs kingdome* in the hearts of his people; and in those Congregations called and gathered by the voyce of his Word. Nor doth the Ministry of Christs word more in this, then it did by *John Baptist*, Christ himselfe, and his Apostles, when they called Christian Congregations out of the *Jewes Nationall Church*. Even the Imperiall heathen Roman Lawes gave way to the preaching of Christs kingdome, and gathering of Churches within their Territories, Provinces, Cities.

3. For *Church-government, Covenants*, wee have said enough before.

4. Concerning a *Nationall Church* also, we have spoke already in the former Answer. And I desire brevitye, and not to answer all your repetitions and aggravations, lest I may *nauseam movere*.

5. It is one thing for a State to set up a new forme of Ecclesiasticall Government, and another to pull downe the old. This they were bound unto by the Word of God: but not so that, unlesse it be the same Church-government which Christ sets downe in his Word; besides which none other ought to be set

up,

up, though never so much pretended; and by men conceived to be according to Gods Word, when made suitable to the Lawes, Customs of every Nation, and manners of the people, as you affirme; of which before.

Lastly, This Church-government, which we professe, you shall never be able to prove ridiculous & absurd, as you conclude your Interrogatory.

The seventh Interrogatory.

This Interrogatory is about the dismissing of members: 1. to become members of Presbyteriall Churches: 2. Or of other Independent Churches. I answer, If any will desert their Congregation, who can let them? Yet it is the Churches care and dutie to preserve it selfe, and all the members in unity of the body; and also from whatsoever may be finfull. If any shall repent, and fall back, Churches are not more free, then * Christ himselfe was. If any for conveniency sake, or necessary occasion, desire to joyne with some other Church, doe you think it unreasonable, first to acquaint the Church with their desire? And doe you not allow of Letters of recommendation, when any is to passe to other Churches? May not els jealousies and suspicions arise, and heart-burnings between Churches? Do you not remember, what divisions and emulations the want hereof did cause among the Churches of old? And, brother, wee desire to doe all things in love. And we desire that others should doe no otherwise unto us, then we doe unto them: as you object. You twit us againe, for respecting the rich, more then the poore. If it be true, it is * our fault, and ought not so to be: if not true, it is yours, and that so often as (as you doe) you cast it in our dish.

* Ioh. 6. 66.

* 1 Cor. 11. 22.

The eight Interrogatory.

This Interrogatory is to charge us, for not admitting to Baptisme any Infants of such Parents, who are not members of our Churches. And, brother, you make this a most heinous and intolerable thing. Why, you know, if we would admit of all, it would be no small benefit and advantage to us, especially when we are to deale with rich mens children, such as you say we have in such high estimation. Therefore that we doe it not for rich men, you may thinke there is something in it, that covetousnesse is not so predominant in us, as to corrupt our Conscience. And therefore

Revel. 17:3.

brother, let some charitable thought take place in you, that wee doe it rather of *Conscience* then of *Conscience*. And what say you to this, brother? We preach Christ to the Parents. We preach him no lesse a King, then a Priest and Prophet. We preach him the onely King of our conscience, and the onely Law-giver and Governour of his Churches. We exhort them to set up this King in their hearts. Wee exhort them to become and professe to bee those Saints, of whom he is King. For *he is King of Saints*. But brother, they will not beleewe us; they will not depend upon Christ as the onely Law-giver and King over their consciences. Now what would you have us to doe in this case? Baptize the Infants of such parents as will not, in this respect, professe, nor confesse Christ to be their King? Why, doe you not know, that no infants have any title to baptisme, that are not within the Covenant visibly? And how are they within the Covenant visibly, but by vertue of their parents faith outwardly professed? And what outward profession of faith in the parents, that refuse Christ for their onely King, that are ashamed, or afraid, to professe to be in covenant with Christ, as their King? If therefore the parents professe not, yea refuse thus to be in visible covenant, can the children be said to be in visible covenant, and so to have a right to baptisme, the externall Seale of the Covenant? Brother, here is *obex*, a bar put.

Object.

Answer.

If you say, *The child shall not beare the iniquitie of the father.*

True, but the parents keep themselves off from the covenant by refusing Christ, in whom alone the beleever hath right to the Covenant; and so the child is withall kept off. For it is not now under the Gospell, as it was from *Abraham* to Christ. The covenant was made with *Abraham* and his seed, so as by vertue hereof all the male Infants of beleiving *Abraham*, were and ought to be circumcised: but now under the Gospell, those onely are accounted *Abrahams* seed, who professe the faith of *Abraham*, which faith looked upon Christ, and embraceth whole Christ in all his offices, and professe the same outwardly, *Rom. 10. 9, 10.* So as the Covenant is entailed onely to beleivers now, and so to their children (as *Acts 2. 39.*) If then the Parents by refusing Christ as their King, as the *Jews* did (*Luke 19. 14.*) doe hereby cut themselves off from the Covenant, they do therewith cut off their

their children too: and this not to be recovered in a child, untill either the parent bee restored; or the child coming in time to beleve, and to profess the faith of Christ, doe hereby claim his right to the Covenant, and so to baptisme, as being a * childe of *Abraham*. Let this suffice for the present, why we dare not baptize the children of those parents, that refuse to profess the faith of Christ, as their onely King, as well as their onely Priest and Prophet. For Christ divided, becomes no Christ to the divider. This is, according to the vulgar Latin translation, (*1 Iob. 4. 3.*) *solvere Iesum*, to dissolve Jesus, that is, to receive him only in part, and not in whole; which is the spirit of *Antichrist*. Besides, willing disobedience to any good order in a Church, deprives a man of the liberties of the Church: (for so he may not eat of the provender, that will not undergo the yolk.) Now this of a voluntary profession to walk with the Saints of such a place, according to Christ, is a thing so just, as following the example of the old Church, who were in particular covenant with God. 2. In the New, they professed their giving themselves to God, *2 Cor. 8. 5.* 3. All societies require some promise of their members. If it be said, we are members of the universall Church by faith and repentance: We reply: 1. this faith must be shewen by a voluntary giving our selves to Christ visibly, and then to some Church of his, if opportunity serve; for Christ will not have his people to be wandring sheep, when they may have a fold; nor to be *individua vaga*, when they may be reduced to order.

The ninth Interrogatory.

This Interrogatory lays a charge upon *Independents*, for refusing to admit to the Lords Supper such as are not notoriously scandalous, nor grossly ignorant, but profess repentance, &c. which you say, is a very uncharitable, arrogant, yea unchristian practice, contrary to Christs own example, in admitting *Indes* to the Lords Supper; Also to that of *Paul*, *1 Cor. 11.* you calling it also a transcendent strain of tyrannicall usurpation over soules and consciences, and Gods Ordinances, worse then our most domineering Lordly Prelates, &c. yea Lording over Christ himselfe, and more then ever the Apostles did, but onely by their extraordinary calling, &c.

I answer in one word (omitting your copious aggravations and sharp censures) that we look further then to a general pro-

* Joh. 13. 30.

feſſion and converſation, namely, to their faith in Chriſt, that it be ſound, intire, and whole, and namely, whether they hold him to be as the onely Prophet and High Prieſt, to the onely Prince of his People, the onely Lord, and Lawgiver to every mans conſcience, and over every Congregation or Church of his Saints. If they thus acknowledge not Chriſts kingly office, as well as his other offices, we doe not, we dare not receive them. And what have they to do with the ſcales, that reſuſe by covenant to own Chriſt for their King? As for Judas, he received the ſop, not the ſupper; for, *after the ſop, he went out* * immediately, ſaith John. So as it appeares, the other Evangelists relate ſome other paſſages by a *hiſtorion proteron*, as is not unuſuall in Scripture ſtory. And none of them ſaith, that he received the Supper. And ſuppoſe he did: the Churches Censure had not yet paſt upon him: onely John by a ſecret ſigne knew he was to be the traytor. For that of the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 11. 28. that was a true Church, though now diſordered; and the Apoſtle refers the redreſſing of their abuſes to themſelves. The caſe is otherwiſe here, ſo as all your accumulated calumniation ſhall to ground. And concerning the Apoſtles extraordinary calling, if we muſt expect the like calling, wee muſt not in the meane time admit of any, either to Baptiſme, or to the Lords Supper; neither ſhould there be any gathering of Churches at all; as ſome from hence doe gather. Beſides, what ſhall the authority be, that Luther gathered the Churches by, and thoſe that followed him? and what lawfull gathering then have the Reformed Churches?

For your marginall note of *Moses, David, Solomon*, about ſetting Religion by Gods own direction; herein you come home to that I ſaid before, alledged againſt your unlimited law. But in that you now reſtraine by their example, all Church-government to the civil Magiſtrates; you muſt make it out by holding cloſe to the rule, that is, *To ſettle Religion by Gods own direction*, as you here confeſſe, and not to eſtablish a ſort of Religion, and Church-government, ſuch as they ſhall conceive ſuitable, &c. as before you told us. And *Moses, David, Solomon*, were all types of Chriſt, who put an end to all ſuch. And while you there exclude the Prieſts from having any thing to doe in Reſorming, or adviſing: What will the *Aſſembly* ſay to you? But they may adviſe, you will ſay. But the Prieſts might

might do nothing, but according to Gods prescript law; no more then *Moses, David, Solomon*. And if the *Priests* (as you say) had no ruling votes: then by this reckoning, what votes do you allow the *Assembly-men*, in their mixt Committees with the members of *Parliament*, or in the *Assembly* it selfe? Reconcile these I pray you.

The tenth Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* questions, or rather (as all the rest) concludes, that that Text (*Mat. 18. 15, 16, 17.*) is not meant of any Ecclesiasticall censure, as of Excommunication, but onely of the civill Court of Justice. Brother, if you did speake here as a Divine, and not meerly as a Lawyer, you would not have, against the judgement of most learned Divines, ancient and modern, and not Papists, &c. so interpreted this place. And what speak I of Divines? The Text it selfe is its own clearest Interpreter. For it is immediatly added (v. 18.) *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* Which is without controvertie spoken of Church-censure, or of the powers of the *Keys* in exercising Church-discipline; as that (*Mat. 16. 19.*) is spoken of doctrine, as the learned *Calvin* well observeth. So as this very context cleareth the former to be meant of Church-censure, as it was among the Jewes. You alledge on the contrary, that learned Lawyer, whom wee all honour for his learning. Good brother, I could wish that all this zeale of yours against *Independents*, might not arise from any jealousy, as if Church-censures should prejudicate or trench upon your pleadings at the Barre of civill Justice. Farre be it, that we should have our motion beyond our own Spheare. Content your selfe with your own Orb, and we shall confine our selves to ours, I dare warrant you. Again, to what purpose do you urge this interpretation of this Text against us? Do not all the *Presbyterians* expound it so? And if this Text, which is made the great pillar of *Presbyterian* Excommunication, be taken off, you leave no more to a *Classis*: then we, *scil.* to consult and advise. And with this foot you have dashed all the milk you gave them.

The eleventh Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* is to perswade us, that in that *Assembly*, or *Evangelicall Synod* (as you call it) *Acts 15.* the *Apostles* voted not as they

The writings of *Beza* and *Erasmus* one against the other, are extant.

they were Apostles infallibly guided by the holy Ghost, but rather as they were in their ordinary capacity, as Elders and chiefe members of it; Whereupon (producing your six reasons for it) you peremptorily conclude, that this is an undeniable Scripture-authority for the lawfulnessse, use of Parliaments, Councils, Synods, under the Gospel, upon all like necessary occasions; and for their power to determine controversies of religion, to make Canons in things necessary for the Churches peace and concernment, waunge all evasions, exceptions (of Independents) to elude it.

But let us examine your six reasons, why the Apostles sate not as Apostles, but as ordinary Elders, &c. Where first, we lay this ground for the contrary, scil. that they sate as Apostles, because not ordinary Elders, as Elders, can say, *It seemed good to the holy Ghost and to us.* But the Apostles, as Apostles, might say so, because in any doctrinall point they had the promise of the Spirit, to be led into all truth, as upon whom the Church was to bee built, *Ephes. 2. 20.* Secondly, if they sate as ordinary Elders, then their decrees did no further bind, then as they might appeare to agree with Scripture; otherwise Elders, as Elders, may bind the conscience, let the decree bee never so wicked. But to your reasons.

First, For else (say you) Paul and Barnabas being Apostles themselves, might have decided that controversie at Antioch, without sending to Jerusalem. Answer 1. By your favour, brother, Barnabas was not (to speak properly) an Apostle, though an Apostolicall man. 2. They argued with those Legalists at Antioch, sufficiently to convince them; but they coming from Judea, and pretending the use of circumcision, and Moses Law, to be still in force in the Church at Jerusalem, and the controversie being between two great parties, the Christian Jews, and Christian Gentiles, hereupon the Church at Antioch thought it requisite, for the fuller satisfaction to all parties, to send Paul and Barnabas to the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem. And 3. because Paul and Barnabas are thus sent, doth it follow, that they were not sufficient (yea Paul alone, as an Apostle infallibly guided by the holy Ghost) to have decided the question at Antioch? As no doubt sufficiently they did, though not so satisfactorily to all. And 4. that they were thus by the Church at Antioch sent to
the

the Apostles and Church at Jerusalem: here is a good example for the use of communion of Churches, as in doubtfull cases to consult one with another.

2. *Else (say you) the Church at Antioch would have sent to none, to resolve their doubts, but to the Apostles onely, and not to the Elders.*

I answer: In that they sent to the Elders also, it shewes the respect that one Church should have to another. 2. Those Elders were men endowed with the gifts of the holy Ghost. 3. Though they had not infallibility, as the Apostles had, yet their assent to the determination, was a witness-bearing to the truth thereof.

3. *Else (say you) Paul and Barnabas would have put the question to the Apostles onely, not to the Elders and Church, as well as to them, ver. 4, 5, 6.*

This is answered in the former.

4. *Else the Apostles would not have called all the Elders and brethren to consult, y. 6. when themselves might have done it alone.*

I answer: 1. Though the Apostles might have done it alone, yet they would not, but called together the Elders and brethren, yea, and the whole Church at Jerusalem (ver. 4. 22.) hereby to give a precedent to all Presbyters, or Elders of Churches, that in cases of difference arising, they call the whole Church together, for assistance and counsell therein. 2. In so doing, the Apostles diminished nothing of that Judicial power and authority which Christ left with them for deciding of controversies, being infallibly guided by the holy Ghost, while they thought it not fit to doe such things in a corner, which concerned the whole Church.

5. *Peter and James (say you) would not have argued the case so largely, and proved it by Arguments and Scriptures, as they did one after another, but have peremptorily resolved it without dispute, had they saie and determined it by their extraordinary infallible power.*

I answer: This followes no more then the former. For the Arguments they used, with the conclusion, were by the direction of the holy Ghost. And 2. The holy Ghost is not so peremptory, but will have his truths examined by the Scriptures, as *Acts 17. 11.* The Bereans are commended by the holy Ghost for examining *Pauls* Sermon by the Scripture, though he were an Apostle, and spake by the holy Ghost. And 3. the Churches assent was taken in for a witness *ex abundanti.*

6. *The final resolution (say you) Letters and Canons of this Synod, had run onely in the Apostles names, had they proceeded onely by their Apostolicall infallible authoritie, and not in the names of the Elders and brethren too.*

I answer: There is as little reason in this, as in all the rest of your reasons: for then by this reason sundry of *Pauls* Epistles, which were all dictated by the holy Ghost, did not proceed from that infallibilitie of Spirit alone wherewith the Apostle was guided, because we find others, not Apostles, joyned with him. As (1 Cor. 1. 1.) *Paul, called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and Sosthenes a brother, to the Church of God, &c.* And 2 Cor. 1. 1. *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and Timothy a brother, to the Church, &c.* And Gal. 1. 1. *Paul an Apostle, &c. and all the brethren that are with me, to the Churches of Galatia, &c.* So Phil. 1. 1. Col. 1. 1. 1 Thess. 1. 1. *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, to the Church, &c.* In all which places, though there was but one Apostle, guided with infallibility of the holy Ghost to write the Scriptures, yet many brethren are joyned in the salutation of the Churches, and yet *Paul*, as Apostle, did write those Epistles, and not simply as a brother, or fellow-servant with them of Jesus Christ. Neither are those brethren (so named) accounted the Pen-men of the Scripture, as *Paul* of right is. Thus you see, Brother, there was no necessity, that either the Apostles names should be put alone, because they onely were guided by the Spirits infallibilitie: or that the names of the *Elders and Brethren* should not be put, without a necessary conclusion deduced thence, that *the Decree there was* therefore binding, as being the *Decree of a Synod, and so exemplary for all Parliaments, Councils, Synods, to make the like binding Decrees.*

But (good brother) for all your punctuall quotations of that Scripture, you doe not all this while tell us (which is the main of all) that which we find in the 28. verse of that Chapter, **IT SEEMED GOOD TO THE HOLY GHOST AND VS, TO LAY VPON YOV NO GREATER BYRTHEN, THEN THESE NECESSARY THINGS.** Now, Brother, we chalenge you to shew us any *Parliament, Councell, Synod*, ever since the *Apostles*, that could or can say thus, **IT SEEMED GOOD TO THE HOLY GHOST AND VS,** to determine controversies of religion, to
make

make and impose Canons to bind all men, &c. Shew this to us, at this time, and we will obey. But if you cannot, as you never can, never let any man presse upon us that Scripture, that Synod, which hath no parallel in the whole world, and so is no precedent, pattern, for any Councell, Synod, Parliaments.

Let me conclude with a passage of the learned and famous Chamierus, that grand Antagonist of Bellarmine. Bellarmine upon the same Scripture you alledge (*Act. 15.*) (as also our late Prelates have usually done) would deduce the same conclusion, that you doe, for humane authority in binding mens consciences. To which Chamierus thus answereth: that this consequence holds not: *Quia non eadem sit auctoritas Apostolorum, & reliquorum Ecclesie Pastorum*: Because there is not the same auctoritie of the Apostles, and of other Pastors of the Church. For with those the Holy Ghost was extraordinarily present: so as what they propounded, did simply proceed of God. But other Pastors have no such extraordinary assistance of the Spirit: and therefore their Decrees are not to be paralleled with the Apostles Decrees, Which is a speciall difference in binding of the conscience, which hath it selfe for witness, and God for the onely Judge: therefore, when it hath any thing commanded of God, it must needs stand bound. Where (*inter cetera*) is to be noted, That God is the onely Judge and binder of the Conscience. The great question in controversie at this day.

Obj. But you will here object, That although (as before you say of Priests) a Council, or Synod, have not this authority to make and impose binding decrees, yet a Parliament hath; and you deduce it from this Synod, *Act. 15.*

Ans. Now truly, brother, by your favour, this doth no way hold proportion, that that which you call a Synod (as a patterne for binding Decrees) should not qualifie a Synod of Divines with the like power, and yet transmit it over to a Parliament for binding authority over the consciences of a whole Nation: surely that Apostolike Assembly, or Church-meeting, was neither a Parliament, nor Diet, nor Senate, nor any such thing, that you should build any such power of Parliaments upon it, for the making of binding Decrees over the consciences of men. Therefore, good brother, be not to peremptory, but take in your cap, full too high to bear up against so stiff a scale, both of Scripture and Reason. But I come to your twelfth and last Interrogatory.

Panstratig
Catholicæ.
Tom. 3. De li-
bertate Chri-
stiana. lib. 1. s.
c. 10. De pro-
hibitis Idolo-
thyis, sanguine,
& suffocato.
Illis aderat ex-
tra ordinē spi-
ritus sanctus:
adeo ut quæ
illi propone-
rēt, a Deo sim-
pliciter mana-
rēt. At reliquis
Pastoribus ad-
sistenda spiri-
tus nulla extra
ordinem: itaq;
ne eorū quidē
sanctiones eo-
dem loco habi-
ta cū Aposto-
lorum sanctio-
nib⁹. Precipui
autē discriminē
in obligatione
Conscientiæ,
quæ se testem
habet, Deū so-
lum Iudicem:
i⁹ eocū habet
aliquid impe-
ratum a Deo,
non potest nō
obstringi.

The twelfth Interrogatory.

This Interrogatory is concerning the lawfull coercive power of Civill Magistrates in suppressing Heresies, &c. Or, setters up of new forms of Ecclesiasticall Government, &c.

For answer hereunto, Wee do acknowledge and submit unto the lawfull coercive power of civill Magistrates, according to the Scripture, Rom. 13. But brother, however, you must distinguish between mens consciences and their practices. The conscience simply considered in it self, is for God, the Lord of the conscience, alone to judge, as before. But for a mans practices, (of which alone, man can take cognizance of) if they be against any of Gods Commandements of the first, or second Table; that appertains to the civill Magistrate to punish, who is for this cause called, *Custos urinisq; Tabule*, The keeper of both Tables: and therefore the Apostle saith, (Rom. 13. 3, 4.) *For Rulers are not a terror to good WORKS, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power?* D O that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the Minister of God to thee for good; but if thou D O that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the Minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that D O T H evil. So as we see here, what is the object of Civill power, to wit; actions, good, or bad. Not bare opinions, not thoughts, not conscience, but actions. And your selfe exempts the preaching of the Gospel and truth of God, from being restrained by the civill Magistrate. But now brother, the time hath been, and somewhere is, and will be, that the *truth of God hath been with-holden in unrighteousnesse, and by the civill Magistrate punished with death, being condemned for heresie. And you see in these dayes, great diversities of mens opinions and judgments: one judging thus, another so; you think my way erroneous, and I may do as much for you. But do you or I, D O that which is evil, in actually breaking of any of Gods commandements, or any just lawes of the land? then we lie open to course of civill justice; but so long as we differ only in opinion, which of us shall be punished first? or which of us is in the error? you write books, I write against them; yet *sub judice lis est*, who shall be Judge? you? or I? surely neither. Among other things, you would have the civill Magistrate to suppress, restrain, imprison,

confin,

confine, banish the setters up of new forms of Ecclesiasticall government without lawfull authority. It may be you will involve me in the number. But what if I prove that which you call a new form, to be the old form: and the lawfull authority of setting it up, to be of Christ? Must I therefore undergo all these your terrible censures, because you so judge? What if your judgement herein be altogether erroneous? What punishment then is due to him that condemnes the innocent? you may be a civill Judge one day; remember then, brother, that if I come before you, you meddle not with my conscience, nor with mee for it. If I shall offend any of your just lawes, punish mee and spare not. But if you should make a law like to that of the Jewes, that who so shall confesse Christ to be the Son of God, and the only Law-giver, Lord, King, Governour over Consciences, Churches, and not man, nor Assemblies, nor Councils, or Senates, though after much Fasting, Prayers, Disputes, (as you say) I confesse, I shall be apt to transgresse that law, but yet take you heed how you punish me for that transgression, with an *Ense recedendum*, or I wot not what club-law. So ends your Book, and so my Answer.

Now brother, you have since published a third Book, partly in answer to your first Answerer, and partly touching Mr. Job Goodwin; I leave the parties interessed to acquit themselves; Only your stating the Question in the conclusion of the Book, I could not omit. You state it thus: *Whether a whole representative Church and State, hath not as great, or greater Ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction over the whole Realm, & Churches, with all the members, then any one Independent Minister or Congregation challenge over their members.* Brother, I answer, if you can prove your Jurisdiction good, we will easily grant it to be greater. But if the Jurisdiction of the Churches you call Independent be good, as having Christ for the founder and owner of it, as we have cleerly proved, then certainly it will prove the greater: For, *magna est veritas, & prevaleat*: for Christs kingdome shall stand up, when all opposite earthly kingdomes, like earthen vessels, shall with his iron rod be dashed in pieces: This for the Clause.

Another passage in the same Book, is touching my person: where you say, *That none of us torce-brotheres-Sufferers, suffered for opposing Bishops legall authority, or any Ceremonies by act of Parliament established.* Here brother, give me leave to answer for my self:

First, for all manner of *Ceremonies of humane ordinance*, imposed upon the conscience in the worship of God, I openly, for the space almost of a twelvemonth, immediately before my troubles, preached against them, every Lords day, out of Col. 2. from the 8th verse to the end of the Chapter; so as when I was summoned into the High Commission Court, the Articles read against mee, were not only for my two Sermons, Nov. 5th, but also for those other Sermons against the *Ceremonies*: so as this might challenge to be one ingredient in my censure in *Star-Chamber*, and no lesse then a pillory matter.

And concerning my opposing of Bishops themselves, not only their extravagancies (for which I also was censured, and suffered) you may remember one passage in that Book, *For God & the King*, affixed to the information: *Were there a Law in England, as once among the Locrians, that who should come to propound a new law, he should come with a rope about his neck; I would be the first my self, to petition the Parliament, that the government of Bishops might be abolished, and another set up more agreeable to the Scripture.* (although I confesse, were I to make such a proposition now, I should as much alter my style, as the condition of this present time differs from that, I should mount much higher.) And do you not think, brother, that this helped to put the Hang-mans knife (though not the halter) so close to the very root of mine ears, that it opened the wider sluices for the blood to stream out (with yours my dear Fellow-sufferers) to fill the Whores cup, and make her drunk and spue, and fall, and rise up no more? Although the more cautelous and self-wise, or discreet any of us (but especially my self) then was, to avoid the fear of men, or force of law, certainly now, brother, it abates so much the more of the honour of that suffering; and the lesse honour, the more *shame*. But take we the shame to our selves, and give we all the honour to whom it is due; and brother, where in we then came short, let us now make it up, by being zealous for our Christ, in labouring to advance the throne of his kingly government in all our soules, and over all the Churches of the Saints, and with those four and twenty Elders, cast our selves and crowns before him that sitteth on the throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for evermore. Amen.* And let this be our main contention, who shall most honor Christ, and most love one another. Farewell.

3
 4
 5
 6
 7
 8
 9
 10
 11
 12
 13
 14
 15
 16
 17
 18
 19
 20
 21
 22
 23
 24
 25
 26
 27
 28
 29
 30
 31
 32
 33
 34
 35
 36
 37
 38
 39
 40
 41
 42
 43
 44
 45
 46
 47
 48
 49
 50
 51
 52
 53
 54
 55
 56
 57
 58
 59
 60
 61
 62
 63
 64
 65
 66
 67
 68
 69
 70
 71
 72
 73
 74
 75
 76
 77
 78
 79
 80
 81
 82
 83
 84
 85
 86
 87
 88
 89
 90
 91
 92
 93
 94
 95
 96
 97
 98
 99
 100
 101
 102
 103
 104
 105
 106
 107
 108
 109
 110
 111
 112
 113
 114
 115
 116
 117
 118
 119
 120
 121
 122
 123
 124
 125
 126
 127
 128
 129
 130
 131
 132
 133
 134
 135
 136
 137
 138
 139
 140
 141
 142
 143
 144
 145
 146
 147
 148
 149
 150
 151
 152
 153
 154
 155
 156
 157
 158
 159
 160
 161
 162
 163
 164
 165
 166
 167
 168
 169
 170
 171
 172
 173
 174
 175
 176
 177
 178
 179
 180
 181
 182
 183
 184
 185
 186
 187
 188
 189
 190
 191
 192
 193
 194
 195
 196
 197
 198
 199
 200
 201
 202
 203
 204
 205
 206
 207
 208
 209
 210
 211
 212
 213
 214
 215
 216
 217
 218
 219
 220
 221
 222
 223
 224
 225
 226
 227
 228
 229
 230
 231
 232
 233
 234
 235
 236
 237
 238
 239
 240
 241
 242
 243
 244
 245
 246
 247
 248
 249
 250
 251
 252
 253
 254
 255
 256
 257
 258
 259
 260
 261
 262
 263
 264
 265
 266
 267
 268
 269
 270
 271
 272
 273
 274
 275
 276
 277
 278
 279
 280
 281
 282
 283
 284
 285
 286
 287
 288
 289
 290
 291
 292
 293
 294
 295
 296
 297
 298
 299
 300
 301
 302
 303
 304
 305
 306
 307
 308
 309
 310
 311
 312
 313
 314
 315
 316
 317
 318
 319
 320
 321
 322
 323
 324
 325
 326
 327
 328
 329
 330
 331
 332
 333
 334
 335
 336
 337
 338
 339
 340
 341
 342
 343
 344
 345
 346
 347
 348
 349
 350
 351
 352
 353
 354
 355
 356
 357
 358
 359
 360
 361
 362
 363
 364
 365
 366
 367
 368
 369
 370
 371
 372
 373
 374
 375
 376
 377
 378
 379
 380
 381
 382
 383
 384
 385
 386
 387
 388
 389
 390
 391
 392
 393
 394
 395
 396
 397
 398
 399
 400
 401
 402
 403
 404
 405
 406
 407
 408
 409
 410
 411
 412
 413
 414
 415
 416
 417
 418
 419
 420
 421
 422
 423
 424
 425
 426
 427
 428
 429
 430
 431
 432
 433
 434
 435
 436
 437
 438
 439
 440
 441
 442
 443
 444
 445
 446
 447
 448
 449
 450
 451
 452
 453
 454
 455
 456
 457
 458
 459
 460
 461
 462
 463
 464
 465
 466
 467
 468
 469
 470
 471
 472
 473
 474
 475
 476
 477
 478
 479
 480
 481
 482
 483
 484
 485
 486
 487
 488
 489
 490
 491
 492
 493
 494
 495
 496
 497
 498
 499
 500
 501
 502
 503
 504
 505
 506
 507
 508
 509
 510
 511
 512
 513
 514
 515
 516
 517
 518
 519
 520
 521
 522
 523
 524
 525
 526
 527